

THE
Kensington
Society



Annual Report
1998

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Society

The objects of the Society are to preserve and improve the amenities of Kensington for the public benefit by stimulating interest in its history and records, promoting good architecture and planning in its future development and by protecting, preserving and improving its buildings, open spaces and other features of beauty or historic or public interest.

Registered Charity No. 267778

Annual Report
1998

*Brompton Park House, The Home of Henry Wise,
with the 1862 International Exhibition building
demolished in 1864 in the background.*



Albert Memorial 6th October 1998.

The Kensington Society

PATRON

**HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS
THE DUKE OF GLOUCESTER, K.G., G.C.V.O.**

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SIR JOHN DRUMMOND, C.B.E.

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MRS GAY CHRISTIANSEN**

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Sir Ronald Arculus, K.C.M.G., K.C.V.O.	Robert Meadows
Michael Bach	Robert Milne-Tyte
Mrs Angela Darwin	Harry Morgan
Mrs Dianne Gabitass	Robin Price
Dennis Lannigan, C.B.E.	Celia Rees-Jenkins O.B.E.
Mrs Susan Lockhart	Mrs Ethne Rudd
David Meggitt	Robert Vigars
Nigel Wilkins	

CHAIRMAN: Robert Vigars

VICE-CHAIRMAN: Robert Meadows

HON. SECRETARY: Mrs Ethne Rudd

HON. TREASURER: David Meggitt

VISITS SECRETARIES: Robin Price & Mrs D. Gabitass

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: Mrs Angela Darwin

ANNUAL REPORT: Mrs Gay Christiansen

President's Foreword

AT the junction of Kensington Gore and Queen's Gate there is an equestrian statue. I do not suppose that many people notice it as they pass. But that is the way with things that have been there for a long time. If they were to pause and examine the podium, they would find that it is a commemoration, 'erected by his countrymen', of Robert Napier, Lord Napier of Magdala, G.C.B., G.C.S., Field Marshal and Constable of the Tower who died in 1890. I doubt if one in ten thousand today could say who he was or what he did or even where Magdala is to be found. Yet in his time he was sufficiently famous for a statue to be put up within one year of his death at a prominent intersection in the heart of the capital. He was indeed a very famous soldier, prominent in the Indian Mutiny, the China campaigns and the intervention of the British Abyssinia, which is where Magdala can be located. But he is today, I am pretty sure, almost totally forgotten. Sic Transit Gloria.

Most of this past year, Kensington has been preoccupied with discussions or disputes about monuments. What should they be, where and of what nature? The plan to commemorate Diana, Princess of Wales by a huge alteration to the layout of Kensington

Gardens aroused very considerable public concern, not least from members of this Society, who live close to the proposed development. I certainly shared their anxiety, though not always the language in which it was expressed. Sensibly the proposal has now been abandoned and something less intrusive and potentially more useful has been suggested, a children's garden toward the northern side of the park. Commemoration of Princess Diana here is something many people feel appropriate, though it always seemed to me bizarre in the environs of a place where she was not notably happy. But the cancellation of the grandiose scheme owed much to local feeling and it is a good thing that that concern was taken seriously.

I wonder how the Society, had it been in existence 150 years ago, would have reacted to the planning of an equally ambitious monument in the park, the Albert Memorial, whose emergence from plastic wrapping has been so much celebrated in recent months? Prince Albert, like Princess Diana, was a controversial figure, by no means universally admired, except by his wife. Today we delight in the newly revealed vision of an outstanding work of architecture and craftsmanship, that has real grandeur and make a very distinctive impression. When I was younger we used to laugh at the Albert Memorial, exemplar we thought of all the worst in Victorian values. In its new glory, it seems a marvellously confident image of its time.

Now the forces of reaction have been gathering to oppose a planned new addition to the Victoria and Albert Museum. I sincerely hope they are defeated, for I believe it likely that, 100 years

from now, Daniel Liebeskind's unusual but imaginative idea will be as celebrated as the Albert Memorial, and not as something wilfully different, but an appropriate image of its time. Not unlike the Henry Cole wing, or Aston Webb's lexicon of architectural motifs from many centuries, that makes up the main building. Meanwhile the fact Field marshal Lord Napier has faded from the collective memory should remind us of the transitory nature of fame, even of those who, like Princess Diana, have in their time most captured the imagination of the public.

John Drummond

**The London Forum of Amenity and Civic Society
awarded the Kensington Society their Annual Print
Award for a highly Commended Annual Report.**

**Judges - Paul Finch, Editor, The Architect Journal, Sara
McConnell, Evening Standard and George Parish,
Associate Editor, News Forum.**

Annual General Meeting 1998

THE 45th Annual General Meeting, held at 23 Kensington Square, W8, on April 30, 1998, was opened by the President, Sir John Drummond, who extended a particular welcome to the Mayor and Mayoress, and to Mr Michael French, R.B.K.C. Executive Director of Planning and Conservation. Sir John announced, however, that the Right Honourable Alan Clark, M.P., was unlikely to reach the meeting in time to make the evening's principal speech owing to a three-line whip at Westminster.

The Minutes of the AGM of 1997 were then carried, the President praising the ongoing work of Mrs Christiansen, Vice President of the Society and Editor of the Annual Report.

In moving the adoption of the Annual Report and accounts, the Chairman, Mr Robert Vigars, also expressed thanks to Mrs

Christiansen, and to Mr John Bickel, for their careful maintenance of the Princess Alice Memorial Garden. He thanked too the members of the Executive Committee for their work during the year, and in particular that of the Honorary Secretary, Mrs Ethne Rudd. Mr Vigars went on to suggest that the coming year would present the Society with four causes celebres (1) The Princess Diana Memorial Garden (2) The V & A Boilerhouse proposal, which the Society's executive committee considered inappropriate despite the approval of the Royal Fine Arts Commission and English Heritage (3) The Proposed development of Holland House, details of which were causing concern to the Society and to the Friends of Holland Park. (4) Proposals for the Campden Hill waterworks, which the Society would monitor in co-operation with the local Residents Association.

The Annual Report was adopted, as were the Society's accounts. All existing officers and committee members were re-elected, namely: Hon Secretary, Mrs Ethne Rudd: Hon Treasurer, Nicholas Case: Committee: Sir Ronald Arculus, Michael Bach, Angela Darwin, Robert Meadows, Robert Milne-Tyte, Harry Morgan, Robin Price, Celia Rees-Jenkins, Robert Vigars, Nigel Wilkins. It was also announced that there would be three coopted committee members, Mr Dennis Lanigan, Mrs Susan Lockhart and Ms Dianne Gabitass.

An appeal for the use of one or two large sized drawing rooms capable of holding up to 25 people, was made by the Society's Visits Secretary, Mr Robin Price. They were needed perhaps twice a year for the lectures which were now a feature of the Visits programme.

At the commencement of Other Business Mr Michael French, R.B.K.C. Director of Planning, announced that a public meeting on the proposed Princess Diana Memorial Garden was to be held at the Small Town Hall on May 26, residents associations and all other interested parties were invited. An invitation had also been sent to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Mr Vigars said this could involve a re-think of the Society's plan for June 15 meeting on the same subject.

The Honorary Secretary then read out a letter from Mr Alan Clark M.P., in which, after apologising for his likely late arrival, he took the opportunity to clarify his position on the proposed Memorial Garden to Diana, Princess of Wales. He had, he declared, received a very large number of letters on this subject, and stood entirely ready to join the Kensington residents in opposing or moderating the project. He had made his position clear to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who was also Chairman of the Memorial Committee, and had received his written confirmation that (a) no decisions had been taken by the Committee (b) every possible step would be taken to ensure the fullest consultation (c) all planning procedures would be rigorously followed. Mr Clark accepted that a number of people had been disconcerted to see him reported as welcoming the concept in outline - but he complained that his reservations concerning detailed implementation had not

appeared in the press. Had he expressed outright opposition at the outset it would, from a political aspect, have been the very worst basis on which to conduct negotiations; as it was there were a large number of planning and procedural devices with which to advance the case of local residents, and he stood entirely willing to do what he could, in co-operation with the Council, to bring about the solution which the majority of the members of the Society wished to see.

Mr David Welch, the Director of the Royal Parks Agency, was then invited to outline developments already undertaken, or proposed, in Kensington gardens. Mr Welch stressed that funds were limited for all the royal parks, but extra income was being generated by car parking charges and catering concessions etc. Contracting-out maintenance work had proved a distinct success, with better general management, improved litter clearance and the re-planting of avenues. Policing had also been stepped up and the installation of pedestrian crossings on the West Carriage Drive had reduced accidents dramatically. Gravel paths had restricted the activities of roller skaters, but the problem of cycling was still unresolved. The children's playground, the third busiest among London parks, was to be extended and improved.

Turning to the likely impact of any memorial to Princess Diana sited in Kensington Gardens, Mr Welch reported that a recent survey indicated that the annual number of visitors had already risen to 4.5 million, as opposed to 2.8 million three years ago.

Mr Brian Sewell, art critic of the Evening Standard, said it had proved impossible to gain any solid information about what was being discussed by the Memorial Committee. He warned, however, that no matter what proposals eventually emerged, Crown Immunity meant nothing to which the Queen objected could be carried through.

In bringing the discussion to a conclusion the President warned against "nimbyism"; opposition, he stressed, needed to be carefully phrased. The Chairman assured the meeting that the Society's attitude was not one of out and out opposition. Although there were grave concerns about the implications of the project, it was not opposed in principle. Mr Alan Clark, who arrived during the course of the discussion emphasised again the unwisdom of the Society flatly opposing from the outset. The concept had many rivals he declared.

A speaker from the floor, Mrs Norman Butler, urged that any memorial should have an appeal to children, who, she claimed, hated formal gardens.

Chairman's Report

I make this report on behalf of the Society's Executive Committee, to everyone of whom I am deeply indebted for all their work for the Society in 1998. This work is carried out by four standing sub-committees, co-ordinated by Mrs Ethne Rudd, our Honorary Secretary. Her contribution to the Society has been immense this year, because she also co-ordinated, and acted as principal spokesman for, a special Liaison Committee, which was set up under my chairmanship to fight Kensington and North Westminster's battle against the Government's misguided proposals for a Princess Diana Memorial Garden in Kensington Gardens. More about this appears elsewhere.

Our success demonstrated once again the value of a Society which can speak for residents in the whole of Kensington, and obtain the assistance of the Council of the Royal Borough and of the local Member of Parliament. I appeal to every one of our members to strengthen the Society even further by enlisting as subscribing members the many residents who supported the campaign, but have not yet become members.

Mrs Christiansen has continued her unique editorship of our Annual Report and also (with the help of John Bickel) her care of the Princess Alice Memorial Garden at the Town Hall.

Details of the work of the special Liaison Committee and of the four sub-committees and the Balance Sheet and Accounts appear in subsequent pages. My grateful thanks and I am sure, the grateful thanks of every member of the Society, go to them all for what we have achieved

R.V.

Planning In 1998

Area Forums and the UDP

In 1997 the Council set up three Area Forums (two in Kensington North and Central and one in Chelsea) to discuss matters of planning policy with residents. These did not meet in 1998, but will do so early in 1999 to comment on policies proposed for amendment in the first review of the Unitary Development Plan. The amendments are of detail only and should not cause any alarm.

Earls Terrace

The developer caused fresh concern by applying for consent to make the frontage roadway a private road closed to the public and pursuing this to appeal, the result of which is awaited.

Science Museum, Queens Gate

A complete redesign was lodged for planning consent. We considered

the new elevation rather dull but did not object. However, the application has been withdrawn.

Holland House, Holland Park

By a narrow margin preference was expressed for the exclusion of the cafe from the proposed rebuilding of the west wing, and the rebuilding of the cafe on the present site. The Society commented adversely on some aspects of the design of the west wing and the Council agreed to call for revised elevations. These are awaited.

Kensington High Street Study

This proceeds agonisingly slowly and little progress has been made.

Tethered balloons, Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens

The Society joined with other Societies in objecting to two proposals which have now gone to appeal. A local public enquiry is awaited.

Caro sculpture exhibition, Holland Park

This was installed without consultation or planning consent. The Society protested ex post facto about the excavation of the roadway in the north lawn on which the sculpture was to be sited but to no avail.

Kensal Green gasworks

Plans for a major new development for 5,000 square metres of offices and 284 flats and facilities were submitted but have not so far been pressed forward to decision.

Campden Hill tennis club and waterworks

The long awaited application for re-development was lodged in December 1998 but at the time of going to press had not been studied in detail. The Society will co-operate with the Campden Hill Residents Association in considering this application

Visitor Management Strategy

This was approved by a joint working party and adopted by the Council.

West London Line

Plans for new stations were considered but finance does not appear to be forthcoming. Revised proposals for a new Central Railway link from the North of England to the Channel Tunnel, utilising the West London line, are under consideration.

Forecourt Parking

A number of applications were successfully opposed.

The Spiral, Victoria and Albert Museum

this controversial scheme was opposed by the Society (and other

Societies) on the grounds that it was a gross overdevelopment of a small site and totally unsuitable in relation to the existing buildings. The Council's Chief Planning Officer recommended refusal but the Planning Conservation Committee accepted it by 8 votes to 4. Hopefully finance will not become available for its construction.

Over 2,000 other planning applications

Were monitored by the Society in the course of the year and objections lodged where appropriate.

Robert Vigars

Kensington Society's News

The Memorial Garden, Kensington Gardens

THE proposal to build a Memorial Garden on 27 acres in Kensington Gardens has given the Society and residents a very busy year. It appears that the time spent in opposing the scheme has been worthwhile.

The Chairman, the Secretary and Sir Ronald Arculus have given the main details in this Report.

Robert Meadows, A.R.I.B.A., M.R.T.P.I., Vice Chairman of the Society, represented the Society on the panel of assessors for the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Council's Annual Environment Awards see page 17.

A few changes have taken place in the Executive Committee during the year. Ian Grant and Jack Single, members of the Society's Council, have sadly died. Arthur Farrand Radley has retired from the committee and has been elected to the Society's Council. Mr Case, the Treasurer has moved from London, and Mr David Meggitt has been appointed Treasurer.

Acknowledgements

The Chairman, Mr Robert Vigars, Mr Robert Meadows and Mr Michael Bach have attended and reported on planning applications before the Borough Council's Planning Committee.

We are, as usual, indebted to Tony Jabez-Smith for reading the proof copy of this report; I am indebted to Robert Milne-Tyte and Robert Meadows, for much help. We are grateful to Miss Tracey Rust, Planning Officer in the Planning Department, for obtaining photographs from the architects concerned with this year's Environment Awards. Tracey is always most helpful, and will take a lot of trouble to find answers to our queries.

We are grateful, too, for the help given by Mr Hills and for the support given by advertisers, without their help this Report could not be printed.

Obituaries

It is with sadness that we report the death of the following members, Mrs Mary Sercombe, Miss Sinclair-Hogg, Miss V.M. Williams, Lady Ormrod, Ms Jill Allibone, Dr J Stubbs, Ian Grant, Monica Dance.

Ian Grant, F.R.I.B.A.

Many members will be aware of the death of Ian Grant from the excellent obituary notice in The Times and by Ashley Barker's appreciation in the Ladbroke Association's Newsletter. Ian was a past Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Kensington Society and the Ladbroke Association. He was the only son of James Grant, a painter of considerable ability and reputation.

Ian had been a member of the Kensington Society since 1961 he was elected Vice Chairman in 1973 and became Chairman in 1976. As an Architect his main interests were in the field of historic buildings and furnishings and what became a life long connection-amenity societies.

He attended the first meeting arranged by Lady Rosse in her house 18 Stafford Terrace to discuss the formation of the Victorian Society and Ian became its first Hon Secretary and in 1976 its Vice Chairman.

In 1994, when I retired as Hon. Secretary of the Kensington Society I asked Ian for an article for the Annual Report. He agreed, and later presented me with 18 pages. I said it was too long, could he shorten it? He said no, he couldn't. I have now considerably shortened it, I still have a copy of his full article, and have given one to the Library. Ian's reduced article is on page 45.

Monica Dance, O.B.E.

Was not a member of the Kensington Society but she did a great deal in the 1950's in the formation of the Society. Her first work before and during the war, was with John McGregor and A.R. Powys, who were involved with the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings. During the war she married Harry Dance, and became Acting Secretary of the S.P.A.B., and of the Georgian Group. I joined both Societies in 1953. Mr Boxall, Kensington's Reference Librarian, Dr Pasmore and I discussed the formation of a Kensington Society at this time. Mrs Dance was most helpful and in spite of all her other work came over to Kensington Square a number of times. She was also very helpful when the Society was fighting the demolition of the Imperial Institute, supplying one of the speakers at the meeting held by the Society.

During her long years with the S.P.A.B. there were only two Chairmen of the Society, Lord Esher and the Duke of Grafton; it was

through Monica Dance that Lord Esher became Chairman of the Kensington Society. In 1978 when Monica retired after nearly 50 years with the S.P.A.B., much of that time as Secretary, Sir John Betjeman sent her the following:

Civilisation's sure retreat
Is fifty-five Great Ormond Street;
It is from there the troops advance
Under the flag of Mrs Dance
Let foul developers beware
She looks at them with glassy stare
And though she makes them freeze with fright,
She manages to be polite.

G.C.

Mary Edith Sercombe

Mrs Mary Edith Sercombe peacefully passed away on 28th September following an operation on her legs at the Charring Cross Hospital. Mary had suffered for a number of years with poor circulation in her legs and believed even at her age she should not be confined to her fourth floor flat and therefore wanted the operation. Sadly she never recovered.

During Mary's 63 years in Kensington she saw many changes. She would sometimes talk about the loss of Saturday afternoons and Sundays. She reflected that long ago one could tell the day of the week from the way people used and dressed for, the High Street, whereas today every day is the same. No peace, all hustle and bustle but she felt that people were still caring. Mary worked in Pontings as an alteration hand for many years and was later a member of the Kensington Society, going on trips and supporting many functions. In recent years she had much pleasure from attending St Mary Abbots Church, St Paul's Cathedral and All Hallows by the Tower and occasional ecumenical forays into Our Lady of Victories and Westminster Cathedral.

R. Sercombe

Lady Elizabeth (Betty) Pepler

Sadly Betty Pepler died in February 1998. She had been living for many years in a Residential Home near Winchester, but to the last she maintained her interest in housing and planning in Kensington. From 1936 to 1966 she worked as a volunteer with Kensington Housing Trust and was Chairman of the Trust from 1949 to 1966. One of the Trust's housing developments in North Kensington during this period is named Pepler House. From 1940 to 1953 she was a member of Kensington Royal Borough Council and from 1946 to 1964 a member of the London County Council. A book could be written about her work with these three bodies, Born Betty Halton, she married Sir George Pepler in 1947, but survived him for many years.

R. Vigars.

Barbara Denny

Barbara Denny, journalist and local historian, died on December 15th, 1998, aged 78. She was born on August 6th 1920 in West Kensington. In 1938 Barbara started as a junior reporter at the *Kensington News*, owned then by a family firm and situated in Kensington Church Street. In 1939 she became a part-time volunteer in the Auxiliary Fire Service where she met Philip Denny who was to become her husband in 1943. Throughout the war Barbara helped to keep the newspaper going despite becoming a full-time firewoman. She worked a 48-hour shift for the fire Service and then on her 24 hours off worked on the *Kensington News*. It was during this period that she became Editor, a post she was to hold until 1972 when the paper was taken over by the London Newspaper Group.

Barbara attended every Council meeting perched up in the press box of the Council Chamber in the old Town Hall. She became Features Editor of the London Newspaper Group. It was now that her interest turned to local history and she found endless material for regular features in all the local papers. She was still contributing a regular column entitled *Looking Back*. But it is Barbara's final career as local author that she will best be remembered for. She concentrated on the two areas that she knew best and her knowledge was truly encyclopaedic. Her works include *Playmaster*, based on the life of the pioneer educationalist Frederick Froebel, *King's Bishop*, a history of Fulham Palace, *Kensington in Old Photographs*, *Ladybirds on the Wall* about growing up in West Kensington, *Kensington and Chelsea in Old Photographs* and *History of Fulham*. It was the last title that began her long and fruitful association with John Richardson of Historical Publications who describes her as his favourite author. Together they produced *Fulham Past*, *Hammersmith and Shepherd's Bush Past*, *Notting Hill and Holland Park Past*, *Chelsea Past* and *Kensington Past* published in October of this year. Barbara wanted to complete her history of the Royal Borough with *Earls Court and Brompton Past*, which we were actively discussing and planning right up to her final days. Barbara will be sadly missed by her many friends and all those who take delight in her books.

Carolyn Starren

The Albert Memorial

THE Memorial was declared unsafe in 1983 when a piece of lead cornice fell, and at one stage unbelievably there was a plan to pull it down. The Victorian Society arranged a conference on the History and present state and future of the Albert Memorial, it was held at the



*The re-opening of the Albert Memorial
by Her Majesty The Queen
21st October 1998.*

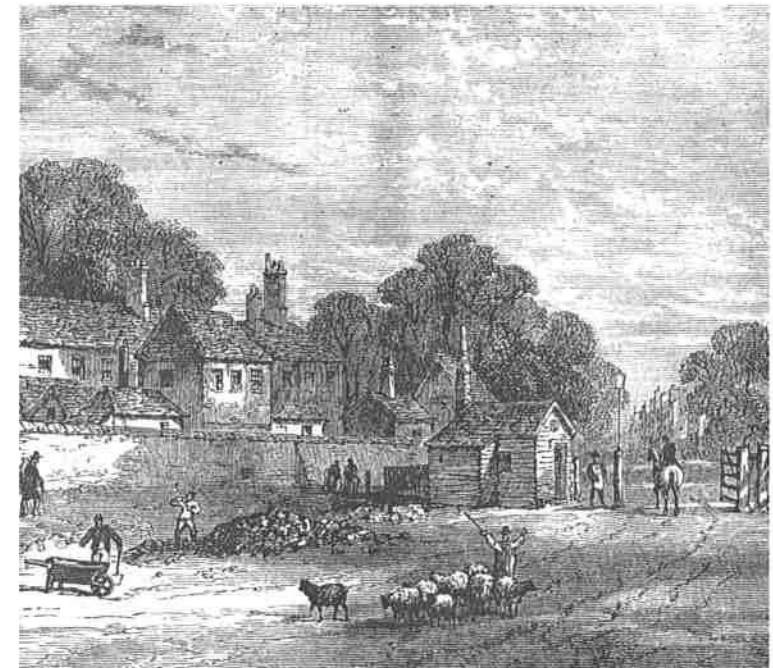
Royal Geographical Society on June 3rd 1993.

Dr Chris Brooks said, 'it is essential that some programme begins again, and as quickly as possible to save the Albert Memorial. We can not leave London's greatest public monument hidden from its public.' At the time it was covered in 140,000 feet of scaffolding. English Heritage's brilliant restoration was revealed to the public on October 21st 1998 in a floodlit fireworks display, when Her Majesty the Queen unveiled the statue.

The statue, 3 times larger than life had not been seen gilded since 1915 when it was painted black during the first world war.

The four year £11.2 million restoration was completed by English Heritage a year ahead of schedule and nearly £3 million under budget. Sir Jocelyn Stevens, Chairman of English Heritage, is to be congratulated.

The statue shows Prince Albert seated in his Garter robes holding a catalogue of the Great Exhibition 1851. The Exhibition his greatest achievement.



The Old Turnpike, Kensington, in 1820.



H.R.H. The Duke of Gloucester unveiling the Tablet on the Memorial Garden.

Princess Alice Memorial Garden

H.R.H. The Duke of Gloucester unveiled the commemorative plaque on the Garden to the late Princess Alice, Countess Athlone, on the forecourt of Kensington Town Hall, on May 4th, 1983.

The late Princess was Patron of the Kensington Society for many years, and it was the Society's inspiration to commemorate her in this way, saluting her love of flowers and gardens, and her knowledge and care of them. An appeal was launched by the Society shortly after Her Royal Highness died and contributions came from all over the world, where she was known and loved, particularly from Canada and South Africa, where she lived for many years with her husband the Earl of Athlone (brother of Queen Mary).

Mrs Christiansen and John Bickel, who comes up from Kent weekly, have as usual looked after the Garden. The 1983 memorial plaque has become faded and it was decided by the society that it should be replaced.

Robert Martin, a member of the Society's Council, and in 1982 Architect and Planning Director to the Borough Council,

managed to persuade Mr Freeman, the Leader of the Council, to allow Mrs Christiansen to make the redundant water way on the forecourt of the Kensington Town Hall into a garden. Mr Martin has come to our aid again. He provided names of sculptural lettering artists and a new plaque has been produced. This has cost the Princess Alice Memorial Fund £780.

The Fund is still managed by Mrs Christiansen, who hopes that members will look at the Garden in the Spring and decide that it is worth a small donation.

Environment Awards 1998

THIS scheme is organised by the Council of the Royal Borough each year. Separate awards are made for new buildings, commercial buildings, restoration and conversion and for general improvement work done to the environment. A separate award is made for buildings which have paid special regard to access for the disabled - this is considered increasingly important. In each case the work should have been completed during the past twelve months.

A panel of six assessors is formed comprising the Chairman of the Planning Committee, the Director of Planning and Conservation, an independent assessor, and representatives from each of the Chelsea and Kensington Societies, and an assessor for disabled access.

Architects and building owners are encouraged to submit entries for the awards. They should submit "before" and "after" photos showing clearly how the building has changed and how it fits into its context, and preferably a statement explaining the design. This year there were 28 entries and the assessors spent a day looking at the photos and visiting the buildings. This is a fascinating experience for it takes one to the northern and southern extremities of the Borough and is a reminder of how the built environment varies so much.

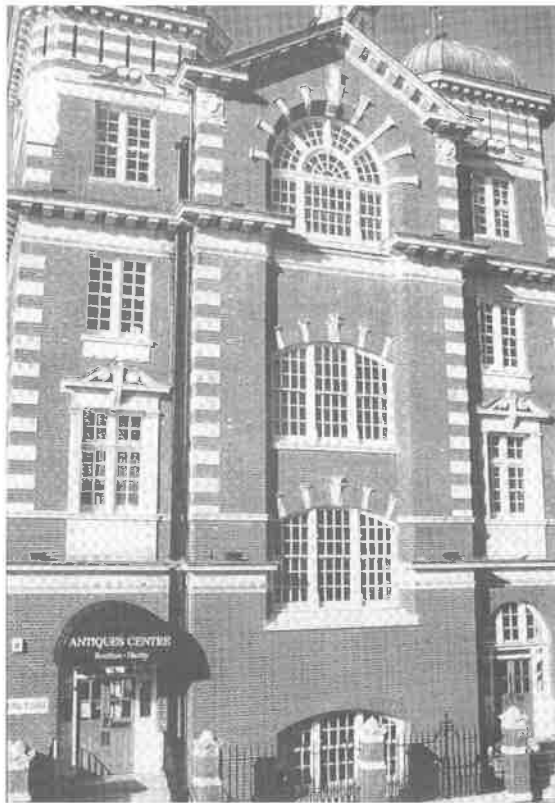


The Barley Shotts Business Park.

This year the general standard was considered reasonably high. However, in the restoration and conversion category some of the work was little more than routine maintenance rather than real restoration.

In a heavily built up area like the Royal Borough, there are relatively few new buildings. The two most interesting examples were radically different. The Barley Shotts Business Park is a commendable building of straight forward design with many favourable characteristics, on disused railway land in the north of the Borough. But in the event this building was given the award in the commercial category.

Shop fronts come into the commercial category, and they form a very important element in the urban townscape. So, entries in this category are always welcomed. This year two such entries were commended - No 129 Notting Hill Gate, a neat shop front for one of the many estate agents, and No 9 Stratford Road, of a reasonable standard in spite of controversial colour.



250 King's Road and 151 Sydney Street SW3.
Restoration of Victorian workhouse.

The award for a new building went to an end-of-terrace re development at Nos 1a-2 Marloes Road. Here the design problem was to relate to the existing terrace but also to turn the corner and relate to Pennant Mews. It was felt that the change from the historical to the modern or even 'post modern' had been cleverly handled.

In the Restoration and Conversion category the award went to No 250 Kings Road and No 151 Sydney Street. Here a long-term neglected building had been restored and brought back in to use with new entrances in Sydney Street. Nos 73-4 Sloane Street were given a commendation.

In the General Environmental Improvement category, no entry was considered worthy of an award. This was disappointing, considering the importance of this category. Colville Gardens was commended, where there were improvements to the paving with some planting and a co-ordinated approach to designing the entrances. The colour was less successful and the east side of the street remains of poor quality.

The award for access for the disabled went to the Methodist Church in Lancaster Road, where good provision has been made throughout the building. New dwellings at 53-57 Avondale Park, Road where all aspects of accessibility had been well considered, and also to the Kensington Community Transport Centre. Our tour round the Borough not only reminded us of the variety in the built environment, it also reminded us of the much poor quality building and the importance of raising urban design standards wherever possible. The Environment Award Scheme is hopefully, helping to do this.

R.R.M.

A Report from the Hon. Secretary

Mrs E. Rudd

The Kensington Garden Campaign

The matter which took up most of our time and energy this year was the Society's opposition to the proposal by the Memorial Committee to build a £10 million 27 acre Memorial Garden to commemorate the late Diana, Princess of Wales. While keen on an appropriate commemoration the Society took the view that the proposed garden was wholly inappropriate and that its construction would gravely harm the amenity of the garden area, cause potential traffic problems and generally do substantial harm to the environment both north and south of the gardens.

Accordingly the Society arranged for a public meeting which was

held at the Great Hall in the Town Hall on June 15th. Despite torrential rain and a tube strike over 1000 people attended and it was virtually unanimously agreed that every step should be taken to oppose the plan.

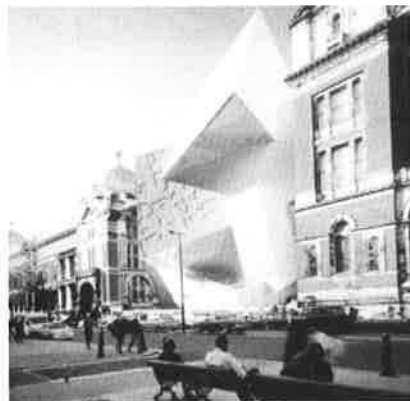
The Society was supported by the newly formed Princess Diana Memorial Action group led by Robert Buxton. At the same time we set up the Princess Diana Memorial Liaison Group to bring together the Chairmen of the various Resident Associations most concerned. Meetings were arranged with our MP, Alan Clark who, most helpfully, organised a visit for us to Chris Smith, the Secretary of State, where we emphasised our opposition to the plan.

Meanwhile public opposition to the scheme made itself felt both through the Consultation process, organised by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, and through a large number of members writing directly to the chancellor voicing their opposition to the plan to despoil Kensington Gardens. We also felt that publicity helped our case and most of your committee gave interviews and spoke to the press at various times.

As a result of this sheer weight of opinion, the Memorial Committee decided not to go forward with their original plan but to consult with local opinion as to what would be acceptable. Your society is taking and will continue to take a leading part in this process.

The Spiral Building at the V&A

Although once again the weight of public opinion appears to have been against this proposal to build an ultra-modern gallery in the courtyard of the V&A, and although the planners at the Town Hall advised the Councillors to refuse planning permission. The Planning Committee of Councillors gave permission to the Museum by a vote of 8 to 4. It remains to be seen whether the sum of £74 million which is the apparent cost will be raised from the public or not.



The Spiral Building.

The Millennium

The Society plans to donate a clock to the Town Hall to be placed on the wall above the Princess Alice Garden. The cost of this has already been covered by a donation from a very generous member and more details will be available nearer the millennium date.

Membership and other matters

There has been a gratifying increase in membership this year which has risen by nearly 100. However, we would still urge all members to try and recruit their friends, as the more members we have, the more effective our influence.

As well as the twice yearly Newsletter which was sent out last year, we also issued a special edition concerning the Memorial Garden proposals and the position being taken by the Society in the summer. It was felt that the cost involved was justified by the urgent need at the time to keep members fully informed. In 1999 we hope that there will be no need for more than 2 newsletters.

E. Rudd

The Diana Memorial Garden Saga

A wag wrote that Kensingtonians were unique in not wanting a garden in their own back yard, but this was not a laughing matter - far from it.

THE Princess Diana Memorial Garden in our Gardens quickly became the biggest political issue in Kensington in the memory of local councillors, How did this storm blow up?

When I first heard of the idea, it was kept very vague - a 30 acre area near the Palace costing £10 million to develop, to attract 5 million visitors annually. Seeking natural allies, I first appealed to Sir Jocelyn Stevens of English Heritage.

This resulted in a pair of juxtaposed letters in "The Times". I received many expressions of support from far and wide; I was even quoted in the New York Times. This was a start.

It was then necessary to gather broad support by individuals and organisations. The Kensington Society, as an umbrella over local Residents Associations, quickly took up the challenge. Our Member of Parliament rallied to our support. The Local Council, at first fearful of being accused of "Nimbyism," then took a strong line. Peers in the House of Lords raised questions. An Action Group was formed to gather support from individuals in various parts of the Borough. The Chairman of your Society convened a liaison group to co-ordinate the action.

The "Evening Standard", with banner headlines, scathingly attacked the proposals and the broadsheets did so more soberly. Many individuals wrote letters of protest. The Kensington Society held a meeting in the Town Hall which attracted a full house of 1,000 people, who signed a petition and voiced many objections. Local newspapers carried many readers letters with only the odd one or two being in favour.

Our fear, that of being branded narrow-minded, harbouring anti-Diana notions, was not realised.

Meanwhile, the Memorial Committee continually asserted that "no decision has been taken" while highly detailed plans were worked up with the Royal Parks Agency. An exhibition, revealing little useful information, was mounted at the Albert Memorial and a misleading questionnaire distributed. Of 150,000 copies (allegedly) only 10% were returned and the majority of these were hostile.

Meanwhile those of us with our heads above the parapet were peppered with requests for TV, radio and newspaper interviews. Mrs Ethne Rudd bore the brunt of these. I concentrated on keeping up the pressure on ministers and the Memorial Committee.

With the support of their MPs, deputations from Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster, put our case to Mr Chris Smith, as the Minister responsible for the Royal Parks.

At the same time, other developments went unfavourable for proponents of the plan. The memorial march through Hyde Park was a non-event. The anniversary of Diana's death passed off quietly. Church leaders spoke out against "Diana idolatry". The two Princes made a dignified plea for their Mother and the memory finally to be allowed to rest in peace. This last statement should surely have given the "coup de grace" to the Memorial Garden Plan.

The alternative of a chain of playgrounds for disabled and other children in deprived areas around the country, and many other good suggestions, had been put to the committee, but they seemed to be obsessed with the idea of the Garden. However, they must have been impressed by the thousands of critical letters received by the Chancellor's office. While still asserting that that "no decision had been taken," and that any plan would be subject to proper planning procedures, they were reported in the Press in late October as having shelved the main plan for a garden. The Royal Parks Agency was, however, still looking to salvage some money from the Chancellor and the Committee, no doubt to save face.

Then, in the House of Lords debate on the 2nd November, Lord McIntosh, for the Government said that the proposals were likely to be scaled down and the Memorial Committee would seek proposals which would command local as well as national support.

Lord Blaker, Lord Strabolgi and others across the political spectrum spoke up very vigorously in our favour.

A week later, the Memorial Committee finally came to a decision and the scaling down of the whole proposal was announced. What

was left, costing a fraction of the original estimate, would consist essentially of a 7 mile walkway linking the four West London parks and some "improvements" to the existing children's playground. North of Kensington Palace to "enable disabled and able bodied children to play together." There would also be some "necessary repair work" to the area in front of the Palace which was trampled down a year ago. These comparatively modest proposals would be worked out by the Royal Parks Agency, then discussed with local residents' groups and the Council. Thus the threat of overwhelming Kensington Gardens with hordes of tourists seems to have been averted. The residual proposals can, with the promised due consultation, be made acceptable.

This is a great improvement on the previously inscrutable proceedings of the Memorial Committee, during which no proper models or plans were submitted for public scrutiny in the usual way. The residents therefore felt that they were being presented with a fait accompli and this they had to organise opposition. There is still work to be done in rendering the new proposal innocuous.

The lesson is that if something quite unreasonable is threatened, we must all act together resolutely, as in this case, which we trust can now have a happy ending.

Thanks to everyone who helped.

Sir Ronald Arculus

Rich Local Lore

"Kensington Past" by Barbara Denny and Carolyn Starren. Historical Publication Ltd £14.95

THIS book is a rich confection of local history, and like all rich confections, is best taken in small portions and thoroughly digested. The illustrations, nearly 200 in all, provide their own fascinating evidence of Kensington's slow transition from a small village on the far fringes of London to a highly populated, sophisticated inner district. But add to that the admirably detailed text, outlining countless facets of the area from the Iron Age to the present day, and you have a work fit to bear favourable comparison with just about anything previously produced on the subject. It must be pointed out, however, that this is not a book about Kensington in its entirety, since barely a word of reference is made to anywhere north of the Bayswater Road-Holland Park Avenue axis. To account for this apparently strange omission an examination of the dust-jacket is necessary, where it is revealed that Barbara Denny has already covered that area in a previous publication, Notting Hill and Holland Park Past. An explanation of this fact at the outset would have saved this reviewer's mounting puzzlement (and probably that of many another reader) at

the absence of any information concerning our friends in the north.

One striking fact which emerges from this book is the number of men down the years, apparently perfectly rational beings, who bankrupted themselves in their vain attempts to capitalise on the rich pickings which the development of Kensington seemed to offer. Very early in this disillusioned parade came Thomas Young, founder in 1685 of Kensington Square, one of London's first garden squares. Young, recalled now only by the local street which bears his name, found himself in prison for debt within a few months of launching his venture, and spent, all told, some ten years in the King's Bench and Fleet prisons. Meanwhile, with King William the Third buying in 1689 the house which he transformed into Kensington Palace, others got to work to provide the local accommodation required by those who flocked to the King's Court. Thus by 1705 Daniel Defoe was to find that Young's shattered dream had become 'a noble Square full of good houses'.

As *Kensington Past* regularly reminds one, many a fine local house has come and gone since that date, leaving only one establishment, Holland House, to compare with the Palace for longevity. The contrasting state of the two buildings today is sad to contemplate, but Sir Walter Cope's original early 17th century residence, known as Cope's Castle, is at least now promised a degree of restoration. The history of what became Holland House through the marriage of Cope's daughter to Sir Henry Rich, Baron of Kensington and Earl of Holland, is efficiently summarised in the book- the history commencing inauspiciously with the execution of Rich during the Civil War. The relatively rural state of Kensington little more than a century ago is illustrated by the information that at that date cows from Holland House pastures were still driven daily to the High Street, bells tinkling, to be milked at a dairy there.

Kensington Palace's three centuries of absorbing history is also reviewed, a period in which Queens and Princesses, from William the Third's consort, Queen Mary, through Queen Anne and Queen Victoria to Princess Diana, figure quite as large as the Kings and Princes who brought them to the palace in the first place. Not least among the ladies of the Palace was the Prince Regent's wife, the scandalous, eccentric Princess Caroline of Brunswick, whose bizarre conduct has been regularly raked over for the past 200 years.

So much for the enduring history of Kensington's two best known establishments, but this material represents a mere fraction of the mass of intriguing information which *Kensington Past* has to offer. Too many household names from the past 300 years, entrepreneurs, artists, politicians, writers, philosophers and many more, are listed as Kensington residents to attempt to identify more than a few in this review, but the book's authors do pinpoint the numerous trends and developments with which many of them were associated. The growth of trade, for example, driven on by such able and ambitious men 'as John Barker, the Derry family, the Toms, the Ponting

brothers, shows the High Street as a magnet for shoppers for well over the past 100 years. The 19th century growth of the artists' quarter, west of Holland House - rich and successful artists such as Frederick Leighton, Luke Fildes, Marcus Stone, Holman Hunt, all of them establishing themselves in houses of considerable splendour in Melbury and Holland Park Roads. The creation of Kensington New Town, including such elegant streets as Victoria Road and Launceston Place, in the first half of the last century, and the buildings of London's first airport in that vicinity to accommodate the first 'aerial ship', which never actually made a flight. Also the gradual disappearance of the market gardens for which Kensington was noted for several centuries, gardens owned and managed by such a horticultural luminary as Henry Wise, as renowned in the 17th century as Capability Brown in the 18th and in the early 19th century by the celebrated 19th century radical politician cum farmer, William Cobbett.

But the book also makes clear the degradation and squalor which existed in Kensington by the time the Victorian age was approaching its zenith, in the slums which festered almost secretly a stone's throw from the prosperous High Street. Jennings Buildings, for example, described by the *Kensington Gazette* in 1855 as 'a truly horrible place' cramming into its narrow confines 'nearly 1500 living souls, five hundred of whom are children'.

Kensington Past seems to reveal at least one intriguing fact on almost every one of its 155 pages and is consequently a highly recommended purchase for anyone with even the remotest interest in what has gone before in Kensington.

R.M.T.



Kensington High Street: 1998 Progress Report

A lot has happened since the beginning of 1998, but there is still nothing to see for it. After what seemed a long gestation period, the Council produced the Kensington High Street Draft Strategy for consultation in March.

Kensington High Street Strategy

The Draft Strategy sets out the four key areas of influence.

- * land-use planning;
- * streetscape and design;
- * traffic and transport; and
- * marketing and promotion.

Each of these key areas has a set of objectives and action points which make up the Action Plan. The Council has indicated where it expects "potential partners" to help in implementing the Action Plan. This was discussed at the Kensington High Street Parking Party on 1 April.

The Society commented on the Draft Strategy, indicating that if there was to be a genuine partnership between the Council, the Kensington High Street Association (KHSA) and residents' associations, this needed to be a working partnership, in which we all helped to develop and implement the Action Plan. This would mean having a sub-group for each of the themes.

On land-use planning the Action Plan proposes:

- * to develop policies to control the loss of retail to non-retail uses;
- * to consider the role of other land uses in the health of the High Street;
- * to encourage refurbishment and upgrading of parts of the High Street;
- * to encourage provision of large retail units in parts of the High Street;
- * to take account of the aims and objectives of the Visitor Management Strategy.

Since much of this should be covered by the review of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP), it is hoped that the Central Planning Forum will take on this issue.

On streetscape and the environment

The key objective is to develop a high-quality pedestrian environment, free from unnecessary clutter. The Council agreed to set up a sub-group on the streetscape and the environment, which will commission

and manage a streetscape study. This should start in the New Year and will:

- * develop a complete design for the space between the buildings;
- * reduce the street clutter and visual clutter;
- * improve quality of street furniture and paving;
- * improve the quality of the environment; and
- * improve direction signs and information.

The specification with which to invite tenders for the study should go out early in the New Year, by which time the amount of space to be used by traffic movement should be agreed.

On traffic and transport

Which was the most controversial aspects of the earlier proposals, the Council is currently testing some of the options to see what effect they might have on traffic flows both in the High Street and on the backstreets. None of the proposals to date has sought to reduce the traffic, which we should perhaps be considering when about half the traffic is through traffic. With proper traffic management the High Street could handle as much traffic as now even if it were narrowed. considerably. The results of the traffic modelling will be known early in 1999 and then we will know how much space can be reallocated to widening the pavement and creating a new design.

The next issue is marketing and promotion. The Kensington High Street Association has had some initial thoughts for promoting the High Street. Their objectives for the High Street are:

- * to be a prime retail destination for local residents, Londoners and visitors;
- * to be the safest and most environmentally-friendly high street in London;
- * to ensure that the Council is a key player in promoting the High Street; and
- * to actively promote the royal heritage of the High Street and its environs.

They are particularly keen for the Council to implement their Visitor Management Strategy, focusing particularly on the High Street. (The Society has also stressed the need for the Council to take an area-based approach to managing visitors.)

Finally, although the Council is only coming round to the idea slowly, the Working Party has recognised that improving the High Street cannot be a one-off project. To succeed in the long term, to maintain its attraction and competitiveness, the High Street needs active management. The High Street Association and the residents on the Working Party are now suggesting that the issue of the future management of the High Street needs to be considered as part of the Strategy.

Prospects

The prospects of some tangible progress now looks a reality. I hope that in next year's report I can record more progress. If not, the proposed White City development which is bigger than Brent Cross, will be upon us before we can brace ourselves for the onslaught. We must get moving.

Michael Bach



Kensington High Street 1893.

The Other Garden

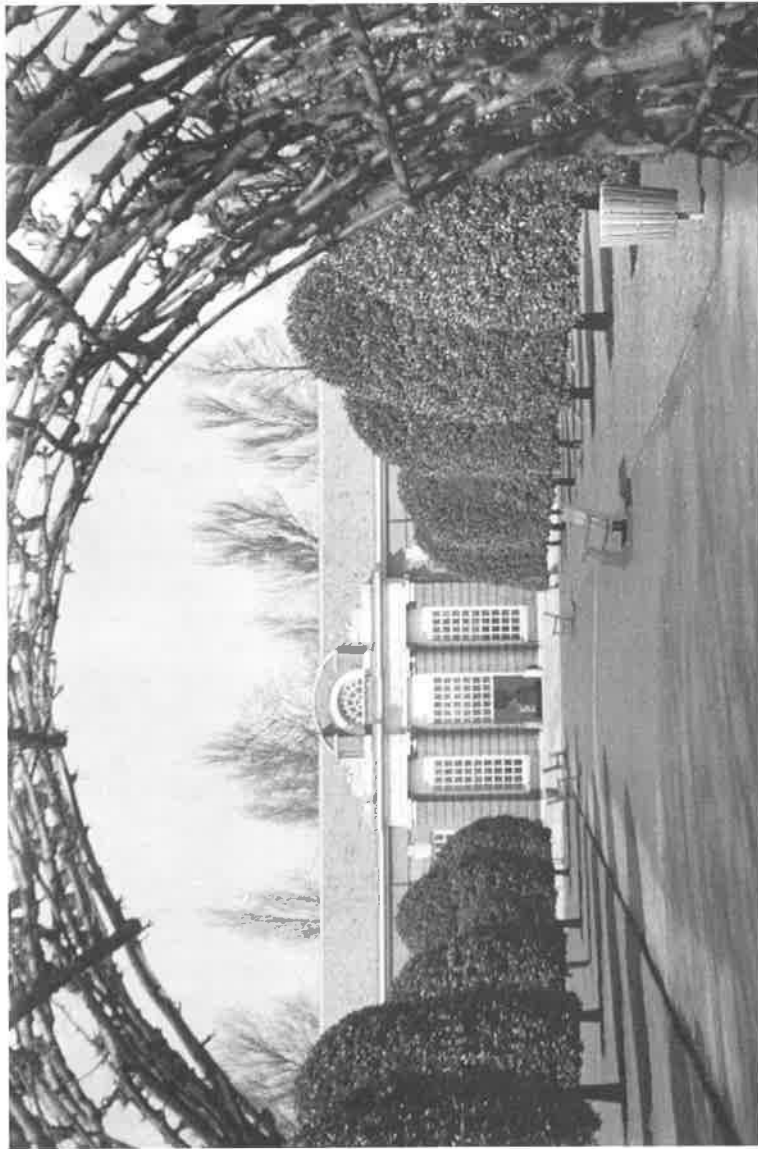
PROPONENTS of the now-rejected Princess Diana memorial garden at Kensington based part of their case on the fact that there had been a garden on the site, immediately south of the Palace, from the late 17th century. That original garden had come into being after the modest country house which stood there had been bought by King William the Third in 1689 and transformed into a royal residence. The advocates of the new garden chose, however, to overlook the fact that the original had not attracted hordes of visitors, as the new one was destined to do.

That first garden, laid out in the formal Dutch style, was the creation of the King's consort, Queen Mary, and was inherited by her sister, Anne, when she became queen on the death of William in 1702. Queen Anne opted to reside at Kensington as often as possible because, as she wrote to a friend, "Though St James's is the best part of town it must be very stinking and close at this time of the year, and cannot be wholesome."

So it was to Kensington that the queen made her way soon after her coronation on St George's day, but what she discovered there was not greatly to her liking. To her closet companion, the Duchess of Marlborough, she reported, "I went to Kensington to walk in the garden, which would be a very pretty place if it were well kept, but nothing can be worse; it is a great deal of pity and, indeed, a great shame that there should be no better use made of so great an allowance, for I have been told that King allowed four hundred pounds for that one garden." The upshot was that the Superintendent of the Royal Gardens, Lord Portland, was sacked, as was the chief gardener, George Loudon. Appointed in Loudon's place was Henry Wise, his partner at the Brompton nurseries. Wise was to become as celebrated in his day as was Capability Brown a century or so later.

The Brompton nurseries, on whose 100 acres now stand such national landmarks as the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Natural History Museum, enjoyed their heyday under Wise's management. His success came as a result of persuading most of the English aristocracy to stop importing plants from the Low Countries and buy from Brompton, so that eventually almost every great house in the land looked to Wise for plants and advice. At Kensington, though, his first task was a thoroughly mundane one, to remove all the box trees from the garden - Queen Anne could not abide their smell.

When she first ascended the throne the Queen, prompted by the Duchess of Marlborough, her Keeper of the Privy Purse, resolved to restrict expenses, especially the cost of the various royal gardens. But her resolution proved short-lived and within four years schemes totalling more than £25,000 well over £1 million today had been embarked upon. One of those urging her to this kind of outlay was



The Other Garden.

the architect and playwright Sir John Vanbrugh, Controller of the Queen's Works, never a man to spend one pound where ten could be had. Vanbrugh, who would cost the nation a fortune building Blenheim Palace, had the task in 1705 of overseeing the construction at Kensington of the Green House, or the Orangery as it is now known, and in the course of that task encountered a problem of labour relations unlikely to be met today.

Vanbrugh was no admirer of the master mason at the site, one Benjamin Jackson, and urged Sir Christopher Wren, the Surveyor General, to allow him to employ Thomas Hill in his place.

Hill had worked at Kensington previously but, to Vanburgh's puzzlement, seemed strangely dilatory about beginning his task on this occasion. Eventually the reason became clear, he had been warned off, 'frightened with some hints of what should befall him if he durst meddle with the Master Mason's business.' Vanburgh went straight to Wren, but the great architect, 73 years old and wanting no strife, offered a novel explanation for the state of affairs. Hill, he explained, was 'a whimsical man, and a piece of an astrologer, and would venture on nothing until he could consult the stars.' It was obviously not the stars that had foretold trouble, but Vanburgh had little room for manoeuvre and thus could do no more than suggest a replacement for Hill, concerned, at least, to ensure that Benjamin Jackson did not land the job. In this he was successful, but it was only half a victory because the replacement was none other than Jackson's deputy, one Palmer, Sir Christopher Wren explaining lamely that the master mason 'would not be quiet without he (Wren) let him (Palmer) do the work.'

The red brick Orangery, with its Doric columns and large, south facing windows, proved a great pleasure to Queen Anne, who would dine there on warm summer evenings, accompanied by a few friends. And as the meal progressed a small orchestra would be playing in one of the wings. Today, with the Orangery rescued from the near-decay into which it fell during the 19th century and serving as a restaurant, the public may eat and drink precisely where for over half a century Queen Anne and the two Hanoverian Kings who followed, took their ease at Kensington. After eating, those monarchs would have strolled from time to time in the south garden, but that is something today's public will not be able to do, thanks to the common-sense decision to abandon the idea of a memorial garden on the site.

Robert Milne-Tyte

Kensington Society Events

January - July 1999

Tuesday, February 2nd Lecture by Sir Angus Stirling
Sir Angus Stirling, a Kensingtonian and former Director of the National Trust, and now Chairman of the Greenwich Foundation for the Royal Naval College, will give an illustrated talk in The Greenwich World Heritage Site: a challenge for the Millennium, essentially on making the plan for this magnificent site a reality. There will be very little about the Dome! A glass of wine precedes the lecture.

**Meet at 6.00 for 6.15pm at
9 Phillimore Gardens, W8.**

£7.50 per person

Thomas Coram Foundation

Thursday, March 4th 40 Brunswick Square, London WC1
The Thomas Coram Foundation for Children houses the little-known but splendid and recently refurbished collection of the Foundling Hospital, including three of Hogarth's finest paintings, works by Gainsborough and Reynolds, Handel memorabilia and handsome 18th Century furniture and clocks. A special guide will show us around, included in the fee.

**Meet at 2.30pm at the Thomas Coram Foundation
(address as above)**

£6.50 per person

Monday, April 12th

Windsor Castle

Enjoy an early spring visit to Windsor Castle. Included in the visit will be the State Rooms, St George's Chapel and the Doll's House. Prices includes entry fee and coach travel, Afternoon tea and refreshments at personal choice and charge.

**Meet at 12.30pm sharp at
18 Kensington Square, W8.**

£21.00 per person

Wednesday, May 12th

Ightham Mote, Sevenoaks

Recently re-opened, Ightham Mote, a beautiful mediaeval moated manor house with important later additions, dates from the time of Chaucer. It features the Great Hall, crypt, courtyard, Tudor chapel, drawing room and the Robinson Library, all immensely worth seeing together with extensive grounds - gardens, lakes and woodland. The fee includes coach and entry fee (where applicable). Coffee, lunch and tea at personal choice and charge.

NT Members - please remember to bring your card!

Meet at 10.30am sharp at 18 Kensington Square, W8

(Members of National Trust £22.00 per person) £27.00 per person

Tuesday, June 8th

Uppark, W Sussex

Uppark is a National Trust property located in West Sussex. After a disastrous fire in 1989, the mid 18th century interior has been completely restored. The house is late 17th century set in a beautiful foliage garden restored to Repton's design.

Our group has a timed entry at 2.00pm to the house. This allows time upon arrival for a light lunch and visiting the gardens. Price includes entry fee and coach travel. Refreshments and food at personal choice and charge.

NT Members - please remember to bring your card!

Meet at 10.00am sharp at 18 Kensington Square, W8

(Members of National Trust £19.00 per person) £24.50 per person

Tuesday, July 6th

Highclere Castle, Newbury

Designed by Charles Barry in the 1830's while he was also designing the Palace of Westminster, this vast and pinnacled mansion, probably the finest private Victorian House in existence, contains splendid paintings, and portraits by Van Dyck and 18th century painters, a magnificent Library, and a collection of ancient artefacts brought together by the 3rd Earl of Carnarvon, the discoverer of the tomb of Tutankhamun, all set within landscaped park land. The fee includes coach and entry. Coffee, lunch and tea at personal choice and charge.

**Meet at 10.00am sharp at
18 Kensington Square, W8.**

£26.00 per person

Notting Hill Gate

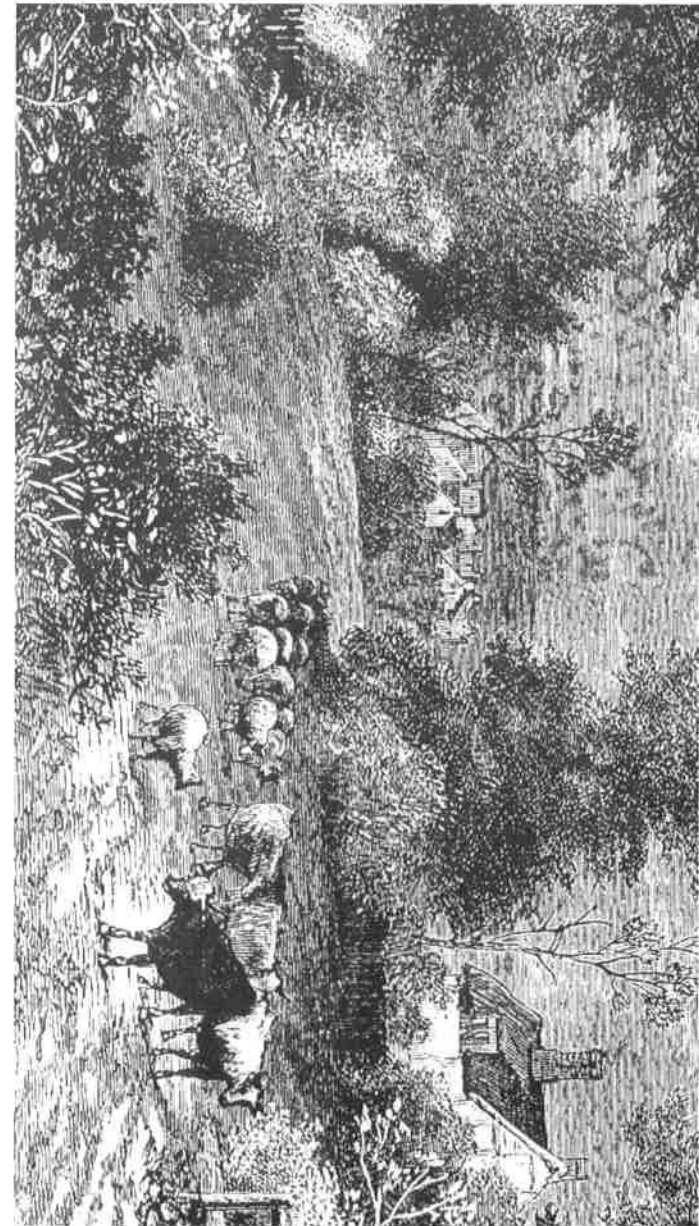
THE work of the Notting Hill Gate Improvement Group continues and the rather bleak characteristics of the 50's architecture are being softened. This has been achieved mainly by an extensive planting programme - 'greening the Gate'. Many of the new trees are now well established and there are hanging baskets and planters. However, it must be said that some of the planting is disappointing. There are new seats which are much appreciated - especially by the 'winos' who constitute something of a problem.

The most recent area of improvement is the space at the corner of Church Street adjacent to Waterstones bookshop. Here there are new trees, plants and seats, and a new entrance to the office building, Newcomeb House, which incorporates a water feature. The latter has not been a success and is being re-thought. There will soon be a wind sculpture by Peter Logan. This is one of a number of works of art planned - another already completed is the lively mural painting by Barney McMahon. It is hoped that these will be co-ordinated in an overall scheme for which lottery money is being sought. All this is a splendid example of what can be achieved when local people, the Council and local building owners co-operate. But it does need a lot of hard work by a few dedicated individuals.

R.R.M.



*Notting Hill Gate ~ 1855
Which stood 100 yds. west of Church St (Old Engraving)*



Notting Hill in 1750.

The Statue of King William III by Heinrich Baucke in Kensington Gardens

The gift of Kaiser Wilhelm II in honour of 'King Billy'
by
John Empson

JUST visible behind the ornate security gates at the south of Kensington palace - but, regretfully, not accessible for a close-up view - stands a fine example of German sculpture. It is of King William III by Heinrich Baucke and in 1907 it was the gift to the British nation of Kaiser Wilhelm II.

Humourless and stubborn, James II (1633-1701), immediately upon his accession to the throne in 1685 embarked upon a policy to convert, once more, the country to Roman Catholicism. In consequence, an invitation to take his place was sent to the protestant William, Prince of Orange (1650-1702), in the Netherlands. Arriving with a fleet of some 50 men-of-war and 14,000 men, he landed at Bridgwater and, within a day or two, it was all over and James had fled to France. But it did not end there. In 1690, there was a repeat performance at the Battle of Boyne in Ireland and, as is well remembered in Ulster unto this day, 'King Billy' again prevailed.

William and his wife Mary, became joint Monarchs and, because of William's predisposition to asthma, they established Kensington Palace in 1689 so as to enjoy the 'fresh air' away from Westminster. Mary died of smallpox, at the time the scourge of Europe, when aged only 32 years. Then in 1702, William's horse, while he was out riding in Richmond Park, tripped on a molehill and William fell and died - giving rise to the Jacobite toast to 'the little gentleman in black velvet.'

William of Orange was an ancestor of Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany and, to commemorate that fact, the Kaiser had a statue of him made for his Palace at Potsdam. He decided to send a model to his relative, King Edward VII, at that time spending his Christmas at Sandringham. And, finally, on Christmas Day, 1906, he dispatched a telegram saying that, if the King thought it appropriate, he would be pleased to offer an additional casting as a gift to the British Nation.

After the Christmas holidays, the Wheels of State ground into motion. The Prime Minister, H Campbell Bannerman, formally acquiesced to the King's wish to accept the statue. But in a private



Photograph of the statue of King William III, which is still on display at Sandringham.

note to the King's Private Secretary, Lord Knollys, he commented that 'I do not wish to be unduly suspicious but there is an ugly Italian proverb that comes to mind' and he wrote himself in what is now regarded as 'old' Italian:

*'Chi ti carezza pire che non scoole, o t'ingannato ha,
o inganno u vuole'*

which, being literally translated reads, 'He, who is kinder to you than he is wont, has either injured you or wishes to do so.'

The Prime Minister was conscious of the tensions that would finally conclude in the horrors of the First World War. And so, too, was the Honourable Lewis Harcourt, MP, First Commissioner of Works, who was deputed to recommend an appropriate site.

A statue of King William III stands in the gardens of St James Square. Depicting a Roman Emperor, it is not particularly appropriate nor, indeed, especially good. But, being so located, it could block the thought of another, having an equally prestigious site in Westminster. Harcourt thus chose Kensington Gardens, well away from things, arguing that the statue would then be placed appropriately by the Palace that William had created.

The statue arrived. Harcourt arranged a pedestal of Portland stone in association with the German Ambassador, Count Metternich - and at, incidentally, the Ambassador's expense. Then, after a brief delay to allow the sculptor, Heinrich Baucke, to become involved, it was erected on its present site. Harcourt had been anticipating trouble, as he called it, from Ireland and it soon arrived. Lodge Number 330 of the Royal Orange Institute wrote submitting a strongly worded resolution that had been passed, they said, 'unanimously.' They demanded - for such an important historical figure - a correspondingly important occasion, formally unveiling the statue. But it got nowhere. Harcourt's reply was brusque and to the point. The statue had been exposed to public view, he said, for three months, how, then, he asked, could it be sensibly unveiled now?

There is no doubt that, over the years, the appreciation of the quality of this statue has suffered as a consequence of the fact that 'Kaiser Bill', as he was then termed, was the donor. But, when setting that to one side, a careful examination of the statue can demonstrate the competence of Baucke, the sculptor. He was initially trained in the Institute of his home town of Dusseldorf, taking several prizes on the way. He was energetic, prolific in his artistic output and was reputed to have been of an independent mind. He progressed rapidly, fulfilling a number of important official commissions at an early age. He was, in this instance, barely thirty when he was selected and, one can be sure, that the Kaiser took steps to ensure that he had the best.

Consider also, when peering through the security railings, the quality of the casting. It was undertaken, as is inscribed at the base, by H. Gladenbeck & Son, Berlin - Friedrichshagen. The intricacy of

William's hat, of his attire and of his knee high boots, complete with spurs, demonstrate that they must have constituted an intricate and demanding task. The skill of the foundryman has to match the artistic inspiration of the sculptor - and this was, surely, so in this case?

A close examination of the statue on the Palace side of the security fencing can - and I am sure that the friendly policeman, will, as they did for me, let you in - validate these points. But, when viewed at a distance, the statue can also demonstrate its quality, having a jaunty and confident, regal style that befits a successful King. Times have changed and so, let us then now agree, the statue of King William III is a gift to be welcomed - and not begrudged - a statue with a character that adds to the fine range of monuments that are a feature of Kensington Gardens.

(Sources - The Royal Collection Trust report that the statuette that Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany sent to King Edward VII - arriving as a Christmas gift in 1906 - remains at Sandringham to this day in display in the Gun Room. This article was derived from a variety of original papers held in the Public Records Office at Kew and in the Royal Archives at Windsor Castle. It also benefited from the excellent accounts on these statues in John Blackwood's 'London's Immortals'.)

Kensington Housing Trust

THE Kensington Society paid a much appreciated visit to several of the purpose built and housing conversions recently undertaken by the Kensington Housing Trust (KHT), so it is aware of what it has achieved over 70 years of existence. The aims of the two societies are not dissimilar. They both want to enhance the standing of the Royal Borough.

KHT provides homes for 8,000 of our neighbours on low incomes. Originally KHT bought up decaying terrace houses and converted them into comfortable, but basic flats. When finance was possible KHT built purpose built blocks of flats, 4 floor only in height, so that the friendliness engendered by the 'corner shop', tree-lined streets and colourful front gardens was not lost.

After the war, the appalling lack of housing, due to neglect and bombing, was rendered acute by the influx of immigrant population. Only tower blocks could cope with such density.

Consequently, KHT built its largest estate in North Kensington - the Wornington Green Estate - which provided over 500 homes. Unfortunately, the bridges between adjacent blocks, which should have encouraged neighbourliness and the oddly shaped areas below them, only result in encouraged theft, vandalism and violence. The old and the young were particularly at risk.

However, KHT and residents have worked together very

successfully and a great number of improvements have been made. The consequence of which is an altogether more attractive place to live in. The local police too have noted a drop in crime figures and a great improvement in anti-social behaviour in this area.

KHT works very closely with residents on a number of other exciting community projects, with a grant from Shell Better Britain, KHT staff were able to co-operate with 'Claws' (Community Architects) and the residents of Princess Alice House - our oldest block of flats - to transform an untidy piece of land into a delightful communal garden. Residents in our sheltered accommodation at Evelyn Fox Court worked with a local artist to design their own floral mosaic sundial. Once involved, residents continue their interest in caring for their new amenity.

It is hoped that the proposal put forward by the Princess Diana Memorial Action group could lead to children's playgrounds being set up, not only in North Kensington, but in every deprived area in England. Meanwhile, we of the KHT Millennium Fund-raising Campaign, are determined to raise all possible funds to provide the pleasurable, safe and useful setting to all our properties which our neighbours and tenants deserve.

Do help us in every way you can.

Belinda Norman-Butler
President of Kensington Housing Trust.

Hubert Parry and Kensington



1998 is the 150th anniversary of the birth of the distinguished composer, Hubert Parry, who spent over 40 years living and working in Kensington. It was at 17 Kensington Square that so much of his music was written, including his most famous composition "Jerusalem". His diary entry for 10th March 1916 reads, "Wrote a tune for some words of Blake's Bridges sent me." Robert Bridges, the Poet Laureate wanted "some suitable simple music.... that an audience could take up and sing" for a Fight for Right Meeting (a movement stated by General Sir Francis

Younghusband to counteract German propaganda), at the Queens Hall on 28th March. The new song was performed by a choir of 300 under Walford Davies and was a resounding and immediate success. Parry became unhappy with this organisation and resigned from it in

May 1917. He was therefore delighted when his song was taken up by the Women's Suffrage Movement. In 1918 Mrs Fawcett asked Parry whether it could be sung at a special concert at the Albert Hall to celebrate the Votes for Women campaign. Parry took charge of the music and in response to an enthusiastic letter from Mrs Fawcett wrote "I wish indeed it might become the Women Voters' hymn as you suggest. People seem to enjoy singing it. And having the vote ought to diffuse a good deal of joy too."

Apart from Jerusalem, Parry's best known works are undoubtedly "Blest Pair of Sirens", considered by Elgar as "one of the noblest works of man." and the anthem "I am Glad" written for the Coronation of Edward VII in 1902 and performed at every coronation since. Parry composed innumerable other works including 5 symphonies, a piano concerto, an opera, choral and orchestral works chamber music, theatre music, piano and organ works, many familiar hymns and an extensive collection of solo and part songs, many of which are at long last being heard, especially in this anniversary year. He also wrote a number of outstanding books on musical history.

Charles Hubert Hasting Parry was born on 27th February 1848 in Bournemouth, where his mother had gone for her health but sadly died of consumption 12 days after Hubert's birth. His father, Thomas Gambier Parry, country squire, painter and art collector returned to his home at Highnam, near Gloucester, where in 1849, he began to build (and later decorate inside) a church to the memory of his young wife, Isabella, and 3 of their 6 children, who had died in infancy. In 1851 Gambier Parry married Isabella's first cousin, Ethelinda Lear, who bore him another 6 children.

Hubert Parry began composing when he was 7 or 8 and was playing the organ for services before his feet could reach the pedals. At Eton he distinguished himself by taking his B.Mus while still at school and at Oxford (Exeter College) he took an extremely active part in the musical life there. His father was totally against music as a profession, and arranged a career for him in insurance at Lloyds Register of Shipping. On 25th June 1872 "the supreme event of my life took place" - his marriage to his childhood sweetheart, Maude Herbert (daughter of Sidney Herbert the politician and friend of Florence Nightingale who had died in 1861) at St Paul's, Knightsbridge. There had been much opposition to the marriage from Maude's aristocratic family, especially from her mother, for the Parrys were only landed gentry and Hubert's income would certainly not be able to keep Maude "in the luxury and comfort" to which she was accustomed.

The following year Hubert and Maude rented 7 Cranley Place in South Kensington. Here their first child, Dorothea (Dolly), was born in January 1876 but later that year they left South Kensington, which Parry considered quite poisonous, with bad water and drainage, and moved to Lincoln House at 24 Upper Phillimore Place.

Although there was more space, (& they had trouble with the drains!) it was incredibly noisy, not only from the sound of horses, carriages and barrel organs, but from the incessant piano playing of a neighbour. Their second daughter Gwen was born here. Phillimore Place was demolished in 1931 and replaced by Stafford and Troy Court in Kensington High Street.

1873 was a very significant year in Huberts life. In November he had his first lesson with the celebrated pianist Edward Dannreuther (1844 - 1905) who was to become his mentor and devoted friend. In December he admitted in a long letter to his father his loss of faith. This was prompted by his father disinheriting his brilliant but dissolute eldest brother, Clinton, on account of his rejection of orthodox Christianity coupled with addiction to alcohol and drugs. Dannreuther lived at 12 Orme Square off the Bayswater Road, and in his delightful music room, designed by Philip Webb and decorated with William Morris wallpapers, many concerts of chamber music took place. It was here that Parry attended the first reading of Parsifal by Wagner in 1877 in company with George Eliot and others. Dannreuther was a great Wagner enthusiast and had founded the Wagner Society in London in 1872.

In 1883 Parry was asked by George Grove (1820 - 1900) to become Professor of Musical History at the New Royal College of Music at 15/- an hour. (He had thankfully given up Lloyds in 1877 and had begun to write for Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians) On Grove's retirement from the RCM in 1894, Parry became Director, a post he held until his death in 1918.

On 3rd February, 1886, Hubert and Maude went "to look at a house in Kensington Square we are thinking of taking". On 28th November, he and his two daughters and Helen Richmond the daughter of his great friend, the painter, William Blake Richmond, spent the greater part of the day conveying books from Phillimore Place to 17 Kensington Square. On the following day he gave his first lesson to Emily Daymond, his pupil and later devoted amanuensis. On 8th December Hubert and Maude left 18 Kensington Square, where they had been staying with their friends, the art collector, Robin Benson and slept in No 17 for the first time; they were joined by Dolly and Gwen who had been with the Lushingtons at 36 Kensington Square "to be out of the way during the scrimmage". Two days later his friend Hugh Montgomery came to luncheon and "we christened the drawing room with a Brahms song and my Shakespeare Sonnet's (sic)". Later he was to write "The new house and garden are an indescribable blessing and make our lives quite different. We seem to have cause to bless the change many times day." Many of Parry's pupils, such as Ralph Vaughan Williams, Walford Davies and Landon Ronald, came to the house for their lessons.

All through his life Parry was engaged in sporting activities; the more danger it involved the better. At Eton he delighted in playing football and was continually laid up with injuries and once had to be



Hubert Parry on his yacht.

carried off unconscious in a sheep hurdle.

He was an accomplished skater and sought out lakes, rivers and frozen fields when the frost came. In December 1878 he was delighted to be elected to the London Skating Club and was able to use their skating rink in Regents Park. That same month he rescued a dog which had fallen through the ice in the Serpentine "at risk of falling through the ice myself and much to the approval of the crowd".

Skating was the one thing he neglected his work for - when news of an imminent thaw came, he was back on the ice in shot, often skating for hours at a time. He was a strong swimmer and plunged into the water when ever he could, frequently in the coldest of weathers. On 18th December 1879, when at his sea-side home, Knight's Croft, at Rustington, Sussex, he recorded that he bathed (in the sea) and skated on a large pond on the same day!

Sailing was another of Parry's favourite pastimes and he owned a number of different kinds of craft, starting with a canoe with a large sail and ending with his famous yacht "the Wanderer." He always preferred it when the weather was bad the stormier the better. For many years he would spend the month of August sailing to the Channel Islands, the West coast of Ireland, Scotland, France, Madeira and other destinations with a few chosen friends.

The motor car provided further excitements and innumerable smashes! In 1904 Parry had his first attempt at driving and "found it decidedly difficult". Soon he was driving from London to Oxford, Higham, Rustington, to his daughter Dolly Ponsonby's house at Shulbrede Priory in West Sussex and to many other places. He would often time himself and record it in his diary "Started (from Higham) for London at about 2.10pm and had a splendid run arriving at 17 Kensington Square at about 17 minutes past 5 the fastest we have ever done. I drove all the way". Parry was one of the first motorists to be fined for speeding. He had a succession of chauffeurs some of whom were not used to gentlemen driving themselves and others who were literally sick at the end of the journey, such had been the speed of their passage! His cars were kept in his garage at 17 South End, where his great granddaughter also parks hers today!

Hubert Parry died 80 years ago on 7th October at his home in Rustington, but was buried in St Paul's Cathedral on 16th October. Bournemouth claims his birth, Higham his childhood and part of his adult life, particularly after he inherited the estate on his step mothers death in 1896, and Rustington his weekends, summer holidays and death. But it was in Kensington that he spent the greater part of his life, living, working, teaching, writing, skating, driving and above all comprising his many inspiring and immortal works.

Laura Ponsonby, Great Grand-daughter

A Life in Kensington

MY connection with the Kensington Society goes back to 1961; I became a member of the Executive Committee in 1964 and subsequently its Chairman. I now serve on the Society's Council. I cannot imagine the Society without Gay Christiansen as its Secretary, but I do understand her desire to relinquish her responsibilities to the Society, which she founded in 1953.

I am sad that I should be making a contribution to the last Annual report that she will be editing, but I am glad of the opportunity to record my tribute to her dedication, perseverance and hard work over the forty years of the Society's existence.

I was rather at a loss for a subject to write about when she first approached me; recent local matters of consequence and special items of local history, which have always formed the bulk of the material in the Report have all been very well covered by writers who are much better informed and lucid than I am.

It occurred to me therefore and I might perhaps be permitted to slip into complete self-indulgence, and write a piece about something of which I have particular and firsthand knowledge this is certainly unusual, although I am sure that it is by no means unique.

I am basing this statement on the fact that I have lived in Kensington for the whole of my life, which extends now to seventy years, and it remains the only place in which I could possibly live. I have seen it change and yet remain the same; I have seen the forms of development advance and regress; I have witnessed social shifts and economic swings. The Borough nevertheless continues as it always has, to provide shelter and accommodation for middling Middle Classes, with a few very, very rich inhabitants and some extremely poor ones. Never supplying quite the very 'smartest' London addresses, but giving an undeniable aura of respectability and status.

Some parts of the old Kensington area have nonetheless altered their character quite radically. Earl's Court for instance, had an indefinable air of rather depressing shabby-gentility before the 1939 war, and the Cromwell Road, prior to the building of the bridge over the West London Railway, was an avenue of promising monumentality which actually led nowhere. The only traffic seemed to be the 74' bus and in the summer time, a stage-coach which took visitors to Hampton Court. The huge houses which lined the road had long been abandoned in the 1930s by the single families for which they had been intended, and most were converted into flats or private hotels. Even though a taxi from the Gloucester Road junction to Harrods cost only one and sixpence (one and ninepence if you hailed it on the west side of the cross-roads), the penny fare for a similar distance on the 'bus made it the inevitable mode of transport.

My first home, in the mid-1920's, was an 'upper part', consisting of three floors above a tobacconist shops at No 270 Fulham Road. My father, who was a portrait painter, used to use the double first-floor room as his studio, but by the time I was born in 1925, he had moved his work to a studio in Clareville Grove. The Fulham Road was considered rather *déclassé* in those days, but the rent of £60 a year was cheap, and it was within easy walking distance of the Chelsea Arts Club, which remained my fathers favourite watering-hole for all of his life.

The exigencies of the conversion at No 270, which had entailed the cutting off of the original ground floor and basement of the property, had resulted in the formation of a kitchen on the top floor. Nevertheless my parents relatively humble circumstances did not prevent my mother from maintaining a certain amount of 'state' and at one stage of my three years of life at 270 we employed two living-in maids who wore full uniform in the afternoons.

My parents being 'artistic' had filled the inconvenient interiors of No 270 with nice antiques and rather spectacular decorations (a black dining room and dark blue ceiling and orange curtains) and the landlord - Mr Sworn the tobacconist - wished to raise the rent. My mother, with her usual decisiveness, made the instant resolution that we should move out, store the furniture and try a nomadic existence for a while, living in hotels and travelling.

It was during the next summer holiday, however that my Kensingtonian residence was interrupted for a while, We were staying at Saint-Valery-en-Caux, and my mother had a stroke. She began to make a gradual recovery, and slowly regained partial use of her left arm and leg. Return to England was not practical for a while, and when the little seaside hotel closed for the winter, we moved to Dieppe until Christmas,

After the year was up my parents moved into a flat at 174a Brompton Road and we had a proper home again at last, The date was 1933.

The changes that became evident during the 1930's, postman ceased to wear shakos and changed to flat caps, the London General Omnibus Company was absorbed by London Transport, Foden steam road engines were superseded by diesel lorries and by the end of the decade, horse traffic had largely ceased. The muffin man and his bell, the lamplighter with his ladder and pole, the knifegrinder, the chair caner, buses with outside stairs, all gradually disappeared from the streets. Shops continued to deliver however, and my mother frequently telephoned Harrods at eleven at night to order a loaf of bread to be sent on the eight o'clock delivery the next morning; a uniformed man with leather gaiters would duly climb the stairs to our front door to present a parcel worth no more than twopence-ha'penny. The iceman continued to bring a block of ice for the icebox twice a week until our flat was bombed in 1940. Barrel organs, their pins regularly modified by the owners, Pasquale and Co., continued

to belt out popular tunes of the day until war broke out. All the big stores vied with each other to provide luxurious restaurants and tea rooms for their customers, most of them with small orchestra and fashion shows for extra entertainment. By 1939 all our friends had a telephone and a wireless and many people had cars. Traffic had begun seriously to increase by the mid -1930s and congestion was not helped by the snail's pace of the still remaining horse traffic.

The bombing of London began in the autumn of 1940, and my father's teaching job was to be evacuated to Northampton; unfortunately a considerable problem was posed by my mother who refused to leave the flat, although in the event the decision was taken out of her hands. As the bombing grew more intense, we cleared the internal corridor in the flat and laid mattresses on the floor, for once again my mother with her usual obstinacy refused to go to a shelter during raids. If there was no alert, we slept in our own beds; if the air-raid warning sounded we lay down fully dressed under blankets in the passage. We also kept a bag of necessities ready packed.

Most of the raids took place in the early evening, and then only for an hour or two; nights when there was a full moon were especially popular with the Germans. Matters were beginning to reach crisis point between my parents however, with the new term at the art school where my father taught (and now his only source of income) fast approaching and my mother adamantly refusing to follow him to Northampton then on a cold night late in 1940, our flat was bombed, and we had no alternative but to leave.

Once again I can remember it all as though it was yesterday. My mother and I were talking in the kitchen around about nine o'clock in the evening. An air-raid warning had sounded, and we suddenly heard a 'stick' of bombs approaching uncomfortably close. Then there was a sensation as though the whole building had received a giant kick; a bomb had completely demolished the house next door. A section of the kitchen floor tilted and dropped before our eyes, and, very slowly, the dresser detached itself from the wall and fell, dropping and smashing pieces of crockery one by one. It landed on top of the kitchen table, a foot from where we were standing. The air-raid wardens told us that we must leave immediately, as the building was probably unsafe, so we gingerly made our way down the shaky stairs and clambered over the piles of brick rubble and smashed timber outside the street door. A complete floor, joists, binders and floorboards, had slid out from the bombed building next door.

We made our way to the 'Rose and Crown' which then stood at the corner of Montpelier Street, and where my father was obviously well known. After we had been cleaned up and given restorative brandies, an acquaintance of my father's said that his aunt had left her house in Beaufort Gardens, just across the Brompton Road, available for use in such an emergency, and it was there, in this huge, dust-sheets,

freezing cold house that we finally spent the night.

It is an interesting comment on the values of the time that not only was my father's friend's aunt prepared to allow complete strangers into her uninhabited home, but that the next morning, when we returned to 174a the street door was hanging off its hinges, no one had been in to steal, and everything remained untouched in its place.

Of our subsequent stay in Northampton, my army medical and call-up, the appendicitis that brought about my discharge from the forces, I shall say nothing since they do not concern Kensington.

My father articleed me to an architect whom he knew slightly, who was picturesquely called Sudney Burgoyne Kitchner Caulfield and who practised from No. 27 Emperor's Gate. His office was on the ground floor of one of the two houses which he owned, and which he had converted into flats before the war. I lodged at first in a minute room at No. 16 Emperor's Gate. I used to have lunch in a 'British Restaurant' which occupied a very grand double-fronted house in Southwell Gardens, and where one could get a passable two course meal for 1/2d I had tea and cakes in the late afternoon at Fuller's in the Gloucester Road, and sometimes this would cost as much as 1/7d! I would go back to the farm that my parents had by then rented near Northampton on Friday evenings.

By 1944, although the war was not yet over, it was decided that the Central School, where my father taught, would move back to London, and I found a house for us all at No. 1 Drayton Gardens. The tenancy for 3 years at £90.00 per annum; we moved in on the rather inappropriate date of April 1st, and eventually we did not leave until 1959.

Kensington was an odd place in the first few years; whole streets of properties stood empty, the terraces broken by bomb-sites and static water tanks. Ruined buildings were open to the elements, their roofs demolished, their floors sagging and their walls bulging. There was hardly any traffic and very few people. After 10 o'clock Drayton Gardens was completely silent, save for the footfalls of the audience when they left the Forum Cinema, making their way home and to Gloucester Road Station.

After the declaration of Victory in Europe, many institutions returned to London, including the Architectural Association School, to which I enrolled and where I studied for the next four years.

Everyday life became no easier in the immediate post-war period. Indeed the new Labour government for all its good intentions, was forced by economic circumstances to introduce more restrictions than had existed during the war itself; these included fuel cuts and bread rationing, much to mothers stuttering rage; the low point was, I think the winter of 1947, when the snow fell on New Year's Eve and lay on the ground until March. Electricity was rationed, gas pressure was reduced, and our roof leaked with no hope of getting it repaired. As though to make up for it, the following summer was one

of the longest, hottest, sunniest and most glorious that I ever remember.

Traffic began noticeably to increase and the quality of everyday life did gradually begin to improve during the fifties though, starting (for me) with the Festival of Britain in 1951, It was then that 'luxury' building materials, about which we had only dimly heard in architecture school, at least became available. Marble, mosaics, tiling stone, could now be enjoyed in practice rather than in theory.

By 1950 we had managed to break a very complicated family trust and had come into possession of sufficient capital to buy a freehold house. It was agreed that I should do this and provide accommodation for the whole of the surviving family. I would have like to have stayed in South Kensington, but I soon found out that freehold prices were already too high for me. It was completely by chance, due to a casual remark made by a work colleague, that I started to search in North Kensington as well, and it was there that I found a house that was absolutely suitable for our purposes.

How times have changed! I have watched the whole district improve over the last thirty years; whilst the extension of the Cromwell Road and the proliferation of huge hotels gradually made South Kensington less desirable for family life, the rediscovery of the generous layout and the large communal gardens in North Kensington became an irresistible magnet for permanent residents and their children.

Disastrous rebuilding schemes at Notting Hill Gate, dating from the early 60s have still not killed the village character of the street, and the whole neighbourhood retains a most satisfactory social mix that is now difficult to find in most other places. The attraction of the Portobello Road brings swarms of tourists in the summer time, but they all disappear during the week; the famous carnival only takes place during one noisy weekend in the year. At least my part of Kensington provides what I consider to be the absolute ideal in urban environments - a metropolitan pattern of building, leavened by generous green open spaces - numerous shops close by - a large choice of public transport - a social variety in the inhabitants - reasonable closeness to Central London. Do I need to further justify my life long devotion to Kensington?

Ian Grant

Linley Sambourne House

18 Stafford Terrace, London W8

Volunteer Guides/Room Stewards needed urgently at Linley Sambourne House

LINLEY Sambourne House is a late Victorian town house which was once home of Punch cartoonist Edward Linley Sambourne. The artist lived at the house from the 1880's until his death in 1910. The house then passed on through the hands of various family members, until the 1980's when it was first sold to the GLC and later passed to the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and is leased to the Victorian Society.

The house is remarkable in that little of its interior decoration, its fixtures and fittings have altered since the Sambourne's time. In addition there are diaries, personal papers and bills which have been kept intact by successive owners and the whole affords the visitor somewhat unique insight into a middle-class Victorian household.

The house is open from March to October on Wednesdays (10am to 4pm) and Sundays (2pm to 5pm) and at other times by prior appointment only.

We urgently require genuinely interested and reliable people to act as room stewards and guides. No previous experience of this type of work is required as full training will be provided. A knowledge/interest in the art, design or the social history of the late Victorian period would be of benefit but is not essential.

The hours of working are designed to be flexible and are based on a module of 3 hours.

The house is embarking on an exciting period of publicity, conservation and what with events designed to expand the activities of this unique historic property there are rewarding opportunities for new volunteers.

For further information please ring 0181 994 1019.



The Dining Room, Linley Sambourne House.

Extracts from Jumble of Memories of Boyhood in Kensington in the 1890's

Gardens of 25/27 Young Street in the 1870s

My parents married in 1875 and came to live at 25 Young Street at once. The adjoining house (27) had a small garden behind it too, a low brick wall separating the two gardens. John Barker's storage and stable blocks had not then been built, nor any of the tall buildings beyond our end wall facing east. My parents used to tell us that they had an uninterrupted view from their back windows and from the garden on to the trees of Kensington Gardens. By the time I was born (1884) the tall buildings had been erected, so that our little gardens no longer had this countrified aspect

Dinner Parties at Felday House, 25 Young Street (just opposite Thackeray's house) were fairly frequent; not big affairs, about six or eight guests and my parents, but much more formal than in later years. When, Lydia, parlourmaid, came to announce that dinner was on the table, the four or five couples, all in formal evening dress, would link arms and walk downstairs to the dining-room. At the end of dinner - four courses, I think - after dessert, the ladies would return to the drawing room, leaving the men to rejoin them 20 minutes later. No smoking in the drawing room. Electric light was put into the house about the year 1900. All the cooking was done on a coal range: one bathroom on the third floor, but most inefficient hot water. Fireplaces in all the rooms in use regularly in winter in back dining-room, back drawing-room, parents' bedroom, Nana's bedroom (top fourth floor) and servants' hall (basement). The carrying of daily scuttles of coal, and clearing of ashes, up and down all those stairs must have been prodigious.

Domestic servants: cook, kitchen-maid or boy, parlourmaid, housemaid, Nana. The garden was attended by a jobbing-man. Its confines were partly looked on two sides by tall brick buildings which belonged to John Barker's new and ever-growing shop in the High Street, and apparently on some floors housed his van-horses, who must have climbed sloping ramps to reach the upstairs wall-apertures, from which it was my occasional delight to see from our garden below, a horse's head peering through, 20 or 30 feet about. In contrast on another wall in our garden, there grew a grape vine which bore fruit in a good season. I remember once, when passing through London from prep-school to Garramor (our home in the Highlands) plucking and eating grapes, and their acrid flavour, which only a schoolboy would have stomachied.

Other random memories are:

Cab Runners. Before the days of motor cabs, it was customary for down-and-out men to run after hansoms and four-wheelers with luggage on top, to earn a tip when off-loading at destination. They would not run all the way from the station but would hang about the squares and streets of residential districts, hoping to follow a cab without having to run very far. If successful in this, it would not deter him from putting on a very pathetic puffing and panting act to win sympathy from the occupant of the cab.

To call a cab from your house. No telephones in those days - you went into the street and blew a metal whistle, one shrill call for a four-wheeler, and two for a hansom. I well remember occasions when a visitor was leaving our house in Young Street, our parlourmaid Lydia going into Young Street for the purpose.

In the days of horse buses (up to 1914). There were no intermediate bus stops between a comparatively few recognised points on the route. If you wanted to board a bus anywhere between these points you held up your hand, and the driver pulled up his horses for you to enter. On a busy route this must have added up to an awful lot of extra strain on the horses by the end of their tour of duty. Of course if you were young or active, you rejoiced in running after the bus in motion, and jumping on, but this was not encouraged officially. At the foot of any steep gradient - not many of them in London - a lad, mounted on a draught-horse, was provided by the company to help pull the bus up the hill. One such, near us, was Kensington Church Street to Nottinghill Gate. The bus was thus taken up the hill by three horses. At the top, the lad would detach his horse, and return to Kensington High Street for another bus.

Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee - June 1897

I was in my last term at my prep school - 13 years of age - and came to our house in Young Street on one night's exeat to see the procession and subsequent illuminations. An uncle was a merchant banker with offices exactly opposite the Mansion House where the Lord Mayor was to receive the Queen at the apex of her state procession from Buckingham Palace. And so on the morning of the great day an ordinary horse-bus, double-decker (but not covered in, as they are nowadays) had been hired to take our party from Young Street to the City in the morning, and in the evening to Piccadilly and Regent Street to see the illuminations. My memory fails to record who was in our party, but I remember climbing on top of the bus with excitement at the prospect of coming pleasures. The view from the wide-open windows of my uncle's office of the Queen's arrival before the Mansion House and reception by the Lord Mayor has always remained with me.

Clive F. Bowman
Sent to the Society 1971

King's College Will educational use be maintained?

THERE is interest from at least two educational institutions to use part of Queen Elizabeth College for educational use, although nothing has yet been formalised. On the back site, called the Atkins Building in Campden Hill there was a proposal that this might have been used by a combination of Holland Park School and the Kensington and Chelsea Adult Education College. This came to nothing.

In the meantime, King's College has sold both sites to a property development company whose intention will be to maximise their return, and this means residential use. This company is committed to building for King's College a new single site campus in South London under the Private Finance Initiative and, as part of the deal, has bought a number of surplus King's College sites.

At present, both sites are scheduled for educational use and it may be expected that there will be an application to change the use to residential. At a recent meeting held at the Town Hall, the Planning Department was left in no uncertain position as to the wish from some of the residents to retain at least part of the main site for educational use and to refuse a blanket change to residential use.

The most likely part to be considered for a new school would include that part of the Campden Hill Road building fronting Campden Hill Court, which is partly listed and has to be preserved. The remainder of this site and the Atkins Building will almost certainly switch to residential use.

A matter of great concern is the likely effect any development will have on traffic, which is bad enough already on Campden Hill Road.

Anthony Land

Improvement work underway at Emslie Horman Pleasance.



The Battle for Campden Hill

SHORTLY before Christmas, Thames Water submitted detailed plans for a major redevelopment of its site on the top of Campden Hill. For more than 125 years, Thames Water and its predecessor bodies have maintained two reservoirs, largely for emergency or supplementary use, with Campden Hill Road marking its eastern boundary and the gardens of Aubrey House its western. On the northern side is Aubrey Walk, on the southern Airlie Gardens. The Campden Hill Tennis Club has been in existence for much the same time as the reservoirs on which it stands.

The reservoirs are now redundant thanks in large measure to the ring main which skirts Kensington's western perimeter. One part of the Thames Water site was redeveloped in the early 1970s through the block of flats called Kensington Heights. At this time the landmark water tower was demolished and replaced by an undistinguished office/flats structure, Water Tower House. Now Thames Water plans to redevelop Water Tower House and the nearby pumping station which will include the demolition of the two reservoirs.

The Thames Water scheme comprises:

- two blocks of flats at right angles to each other - one fronting Campden Hill Road, the second fronting Aubrey Walk opposite St George's Church. In total these two blocks will consist of 41 flats;
- a three-sided 'square' of 21 substantial town houses with its open side fronting Aubrey Walk;
- a new tennis club with six outside courts on the roof and six indoor courts below. The existing clubhouse would remain;
- basement car parking for the houses (two spaces each) and flats (one space each) accessed through the only entry point to the site opposite Hillsleigh Road.

This Association has been involved in continuing consultation with Thames Water over the past three years. Our objections have focused on the scale and bulk of the proposed development which threatens to dwarf Aubrey Walk in particular; its effect on traffic generally and parking in particular in an area where both already present acute problems; this effect being compounded through increased indoor use of a commercial operation - the tennis club - potentially 24 hours a day right in the middle of a residential area.

Above all, our contention is that no less than 11 policies in the Council's own Unitary Development Plan are breached by Thames Water's proposals. Details have been sent to the Council's Director

of Planning and to all members of its Planning Committee, Ward Councillors, including the Leader of the Council, Mrs Iuain Hanham, and the Rt. Hon. Alan Clark, Member of Parliament for Kensington and Chelsea.

The plan recognises the site as public open space and in this sensitive conservation area we believe it should remain so, with minimal but essential rebuilding of the unloved Water Tower House and pumping station. The bulk of the site could become - for example - a small woodland park, open to all, or perhaps a formal garden.

The Council's Planning Committee is likely to consider Thames Water's planning application as early as the second half of January. This Association has registered its strong objections as have the Kensington Heights Association and many other local residents. The plans are open for inspection at the Town Hall. The more comments are registered, the better informed will the Council be about residents' views.

Please write to Michael French, Director of Planning, RBK&C, The Town Hall, Hornton Street, London W8 7NX as soon as possible. Please also send a copy of your letter to Councillor David Campion, Chairman of the Planning Committee at the same address.

Anthony Land

Late News

It is with sadness we report the death of the former Bishop of Kensington the Rt. Rev. Ronald Goodchild.

During his long tenure from 1964-80 he built a reputation as a great pastoral leader who worked hard in all his parishes, cutting across racial and social divides.

He also chaired the worldwide relief charity Christian Aid from 1964-74, a period of substantial growth in the charity's work.

The present Bishop of Kensington, the Rt. Rev. Michael Colclough, paid tribute to his predecessor, who died on December 28. "It was with great sadness that I learnt about his death," he said.

"He was greatly valued by parishes during his long and faithful ministry as Bishop of Kensington, and I know that many people in our parishes remember him particularly for his warmth and affection. My prayers and thoughts are with Jean and her family at this sad time."

Bishop Goodchild had a distinguished military record, serving as an RAF chaplain during and in the aftermath of the Second World War. He was mentioned twice in dispatches.

Constitution of The Kensington Society

1. The name of the Society shall be The Kensington Society.
2. The objects of the Society shall be to preserve and improve the amenities of Kensington for the public benefit by stimulating interest in its history and records, promoting good architecture and planning in its future development and by protecting, preserving and improving its buildings, open spaces and other features of beauty or historic or public interest.
3. **MEMBERSHIP.** The membership shall comprise Ordinary Members, Corporate Members and Affiliated Societies, i.e. amenity societies for areas within Kensington who apply for affiliation with the Society and are accepted by the Executive Committee.
4. **SUBSCRIPTIONS.** Corporate members shall pay a minimum annual subscription of £25. Ordinary members shall pay a minimum annual subscription of £10. Affiliated Amenity Societies shall pay an annual subscription of £10. The minimum annual subscription for different classes of members (ordinary, corporate, affiliated amenity societies) shall be such sums as may be determined by the Executive Committee from time to time. Subscriptions are payable on January 1st each year.
5. **THE OFFICERS.** The officers of the society shall be the President, one or more Vice-Presidents, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee, the Hon. Secretary, the Hon. Treasurer and such further honorary officers as the Executive Committee may from time to time appoint.
6. **THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.** The Executive Committee shall consist of not more than twelve members including the Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer.
7. (a) The Executive Committee shall be the governing body of the Society. It shall have power to (i) Make byelaws; (ii) Co-opt members and fill vacancies on the Executive Committee or among the officers of the Society that may arise for the current year; (iii) Take any steps they may consider desirable to further the interests and objects of the Society.
(b) A quorum of the Executive Committee shall consist of not less than five members.
(c) Not less than three Executive Committee Meetings shall be convened in any one year.
8. **THE COUNCIL.** The Council shall consist of not more than thirty members. They shall be appointed by the Executive Committee. The function of the Council shall be to support the Executive Committee in any matters relevant to the objects of

the Society.

9. GENERAL MEETINGS.

- (a) An Annual General Meeting of members of the Society, of which not less than 28 days' notice shall be given to members, shall be held in each calendar year at which the Executive Committee shall submit a Report and an audited Statement of Account for the year to the previous 31st December.
- (b) Other General Meetings of members may be convened from time to time by the Executive Committee on not less than 14 days' notice to members.
- (c) The date, time and place of each General Meeting shall be fixed by the Executive Committee, and the Chair shall be taken by the President or in his absence by some other Officer of the Society nominated by the Executive Committee.
- (d) Twenty persons present, being Ordinary Members or authorised representatives of Corporate Members or Affiliated Societies, shall form a quorum at a General Meeting.
- (e) Resolutions of the members in General Meeting shall (except where otherwise stated in these Rules) be passed by a simple majority of members present and voting on a show of hands, each member having one vote. Corporate members and Affiliated Societies must notify the Hon. Secretary of the Society in writing of the persons authorised to receive notice, attend and vote on their behalf, failing which they shall not be so entitled.

10. ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

- (a) The election of Officers of the Society (other than the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee) and of members of the Executive Committee shall be effected by resolution of the Members of the Society at the Annual General Meeting, and the election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee shall be effected by resolution of the Executive Committee at its first meeting after the Annual General Meeting.
- (b) Subject to paragraphs (c) and (d) below, any Ordinary Member shall be eligible for election as an Officer of the Society or as a member of the Executive Committee.
- (c) Candidates for such election, other than those standing for re-election under paragraph (e) below, must be supported by nominations signed by two other Members, which nominations must reach the Hon. Secretary not less than fourteen days before the Annual General Meeting.
- (d) In the case of election as an Officer, the candidates must also be approved by the Executive Committee, which

approval may be conferred either before the Annual General Meeting or at the first meeting of the Executive Committee thereafter. If such approval be withheld the office in question may be filled by the Executive Committee for the current year.

- (e) Unless curtailed by death or resignation or under paragraph (i) below, the tenure of office of the persons elected shall be -
 - (i) in the case of the President, until the third Annual General Meeting after his election;
 - (ii) in the cases of the Vice-President(s), the Hon. Secretary and the Hon. Treasurer, indefinite;
 - (iii) in all other cases, until the next Annual General Meeting after their election;but in cases (i) and (iii) those vacating office shall be eligible for re-election.
 - (f) The tenure of office of any Officer of the Society other than President may be terminated at any time by resolution of the Executive Committee.
11. ALTERATION OF THE RULES. No rule shall be altered or revoked except by a resolution of the members in General Meeting passed by a majority consisting of not less than two-thirds of the members present and voting.
12. DISSOLUTION OF THE SOCIETY. The Society shall not be dissolved unless a majority of two-thirds of the subscribing members signify their approval of such a course by means of a ballot taken after receipt by the said members of a statement by the Executive Committee, whom failing by not less than ten Ordinary Members or the President of the Society, setting forth a summary of the arguments for and against such a course and their or his views thereon.
- 13 SURPLUS ASSETS. In the event of such dissolution the surplus funds (if any) of the Society may be transferred to such one or more charitable bodies, having objects similar to or reasonably consistent with those of the Society, as may be chosen by the Executive Committee and approved by the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales.

4th February 1991

Reports from Local Societies

Kensington Court Residents Association

We have been concerned this year as usual with:

- (a) detailed problems affecting our (small) area directly, and
- (b) other developments affecting us, and others, as residents of the Borough.

Being so near the High Street we have plenty of work under both headings.

In the first category (a) we have opposed undesirable building extensions, especially atop mansion blocks; noise and other nuisances from cafes, clubs, restaurants, the local pub and foreign college; extensions of hours sought by fast-food outlets; and encroachment on pavement by tables and chairs, motorcycles and bicycles; and we have tried to improve parking for residents.

In the second category (b) there was the Diana Memorial Garden (now scrapped as such); the proposed extensions to the V & A and Natural History Museums; redevelopment of Holland House; a Harrods Heliport; a tethered balloon in the parks; the Kensington High Street improvement plan (marking time); and aircraft noise.

It is a constant battle to keep condition in our patch tolerable for residents. We need the support of our members, and of other interested residents (every letter counts); of like minded Associations, Amenity Societies especially the Kensington Society itself; of our Ward Councillor, the Council's officers and committees, and (for licensing cases) the Magistrates' Court; and of our M.P. where appropriate. In the case of the Memorial Garden, the forces were effectively mobilised. We also need the co-operation of the police, which we seek through the Neighbourhood Watch network.

To end on a personal note, if I may, I recently visited the the civic centre in Birmingham with its new squares, new Symphony Hall, Repertory Theatre and convention centre, and pedestrianised main shopping street. Compared with what we are used to in and near our own High Street it was all so strikingly clean. Perhaps this is partly due to fewer tourists and fewer fast-food outlets. As I have said in the context of the Kensington High Street improvement plan, the best way to improve the High Street quickly is to clean it up.

I say it again.

Sir Ronald Arculus, Chairman
Kensington Court Residents' Association

Campden Hill Residents Association

The main issues affecting local residents continue to be the prospective re-development of the Thames Water site on Aubrey Walk and Queen Elizabeth College in Campden Hill.

Discussions with representatives from Thames Water, local Councillors and residents are ongoing with the aim of achieving an acceptable proposal for sympathetic development of the Thames Water site with maximum retention of open space. We are grateful to all the local residents who have voiced their opinion on these

proposals and urge them also to raise their objections with the council.

The redevelopment of Queen Elizabeth College is of great concern not only because the Committee strongly support applications for continued educational use, but because of the inevitable chaos that will result in the area from simultaneous works on both these major sites.

Other local concerns have included renovation of Holland House and the proposals for memorial garden for Diana, Princess of Wales. We applaud the lead taken by the Kensington Society with regard to the potential effects of the memorial garden on the area when alternative plans, such as those nation-wide children's playground are more appropriate. Only one member resigned as a result of our position on this matter.

Both the AGM, with an excellent talk by Mr Harry James, and the Garden Party, held once again at Thorpe Lodge in fairer weather, were well attended. A membership drive earlier in the year was successful in recruiting 87 new members so that 1998 closes with a membership of 431 households.

Mrs Anne Margaronis, Honorary Secretary

Campden Street Preservation Society

Our Society is so relieved that the agreement has been made to abandon the plan for the Princess Diana Memorial Garden. Many of our members have worked hard to prevent it.

Our A.G.M on 13th May, was attended by twenty one members, and we welcomed Councillors Christopher Buckmaster and Robert Freeman. We also welcomed Mr Anthony Land and Mr Robert Vigers who encouraged members to join the Kensington Society.

Bluebird Cottage which adjoins Byam Shaw House, is to be demolished and a modern two story house erected.

The Windsor Castle Pub, owned by Bass, have put in an application to build a larger kitchen and serving area by extending backwards into their charming garden. This would involve the destruction of trees and diminution of space for the pub's vast clientele. This move is being vigorously opposed.

Owners of houses in this lovely street are being encouraged to decorate the exterior of their homes. The Chairman keeps a list of builders and decorators!

Many houses are now rented out which is sad, because on the whole, tenants take no interest in preserving the beauty of the street

We would happily see bicycles confirmed to a bicycle 'park' in the street, instead of dangerously cluttering our pavements in their attachment to traffic meters, lamp posts and railings.

Evelyn Ellison, Chairman

Cornwall Gardens Residents Association

In February 1998, Robin Balwer retired from being Chairman of the

Cornwall Gardens Residents Association after fifteen years. I am sure that everyone in Cornwall Gardens appreciates the tireless effort he put in on our behalf.

On the planning front there have been no major applications for alterations within the square. The nearby Point-West development remains a cause of concern for some residents. I continue to be in contact with the developers and I am trying to ensure that there is good communication between them and the association. I have been told that the last floor should be completed around November 1999.

Many residents have expressed disquiet about the continuing decline of Gloucester Road and the Association is keeping a close eye on the applications received for this area.

The Association has also been instrumental in communicating the residents' views on the impact of the Princess Diana Memorial on the Borough to the Memorial Committee. Our Association greatly appreciates the Council's efforts (in particular Mrs Joan Hammond's) in ensuring that an appropriate memorial is decided upon.

Finally, for the first time this decade we held a late summer garden party in the gardens. We had lovely weather, a great jazz band and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. Many local businesses generously supported our raffle.

Dr Theodora Bond, Chairman
Miss Ursula Overbury, Secretary

Edwardes Square, Scarsdale and Abingdon Association

Not surprisingly, the battle for Kensington Gardens has taken up a great deal of time. ESSA joined the Kensington Society's Memorial Gardens Committee, later expanded to the Liaison Group with representatives from Westminster as well as Kensington. ESSA's secretary co-founded the Princess Diana Memorial Action Group with Robert Buxton. The Action Group's funds, donated by local residents and a number of Residents' Associations, were, with the agreement of the Charities' Commission, administered by ESSA. ESSA supported the Action Group, which was assisted by various members of ESSA's Committee. We are extremely happy at the outcome and feel that the efforts of all involved were worthwhile and should be applauded.

ESSA's AGM in Leighton House was well-attended, and although it was a disappointment that Brian Sewell, our Speaker, was unable to attend due to illness, Harry James, writer of the Grapevine column, nobly stepped in at the last minute and gave an excellent talk. Our MP, Alan Clark made a surprise appearance but unfortunately had to leave before the meeting discussed the Memorial Gardens proposal.

Earls Terrace continued to dominate planning matters. An application to close the Earls Terrace carriageway to the public was resisted by the Local Council, ESSA and residents. Although not strictly a planning issue, the DoE decided to hear an appeal against

the Council's non-determination of the application at the Public Enquiry. ESSA made representation at the Enquiry which took place in October. A separate application has been made to the Traffic Directorate for London which is also likely to be determined at appeal. ESSA will again make representation in support of the Council and local residents.

ESSA continues to be represented on the Kensington High Street Working Party and is involved in discussions on updating the UDP. Traffic problems are again high on the list of residents concerns and although much has been achieved, there are still a great number of problems to address.

The indication is that next year will be as busy as last. We are grateful to our members and Committee for their support and look forward to an active 1999.

His Honour Judge Gordon, Chairman, 7 Edwardes Square, W.8.
Mrs Suzanne Anderson, Secretary, 8 Phillimore Terrace, W.8.

Ladbroke Association

The year has been overshadowed by the sad death in September of Ian Grant after an illness borne with characteristic courage and humour. No-one will easily forget the velvet smoking cap worn, even when addressing the Planning Committee, to hide the loss of hair, even if they did not know what it portended. Ian was a founder member of our Association and had been on our committee throughout its twenty seven year existence. What will we do without his encyclopaedic knowledge and wise guidance?

The year has otherwise been fairly uneventful. The article 4.2 direction imposed by the Council in 1996 protects our doors and windows from the scourge of UPVC and our front gardens from being turned into car parks - although we were sad to be told that one of our residents had been informed by the Planning Dept. that she did not need permission for this. We hope the individual responsible is now better informed. The appeal over 122 Kensington Park Road was dismissed and we were spared a huge glass box, although we have an oversized pastiche of the former conservatory instead. The owner of 70a Ladbroke Grove, which she likes to refer to as 52 Arundel, is still trying to expropriate part of the communal garden, apparently by spending more on lawyers than she thinks her neighbours can afford. We have contributed to the garden committee's legal costs. A new threat was the application of South Bank School, who had in the past converted two houses in Kensington Park Road into a school without first obtaining planning permission, to take over the London Electricity site in Victoria Gardens for educational use, to the consternation of the neighbours. Happily this was refused and the site has now been taken by Land Securities to be developed eventually in accordance with a planning brief prepared by the Council.

Our social life has included a most enjoyable party on 21 April at

the RIBA's Heinz Gallery in Portman Square, where we enjoyed an exhibition of the works of Thomas Allom, who designed many of the finest houses on the Ladbroke estate, though alas none of them were depicted. In June we enjoyed a walk round Ladbroke Square and two others gardens with Henrietta Phipps as our knowledgeable guide. On 16 December we shall be holding our Christmas party by kind invitation of the owners of a house in Lansdowne Crescent. Only a few years ago this house was the subject of a successful appeal against refusal of permission to build in a listed gap between these paired villas, with catastrophic consequences subsequently for almost every other gap in the Crescent. Bygones are now bygones, however, and this could never happen nowadays - could it? We look forward to another year of eternal vigilance.

Stephen Enthoven, Chairman

Norland Conservation Society

A great variety of issues has come before the Committee this year, ranging from planning to traffic and water mains.

Planning matters have included the usual concern over rear extensions, the ownership of gardens and unsuitable development of mews properties, the less usual development of the piano factory site in Swanscombe Road (a development much mitigated and improved by helpful discussions between the developer and the Society), and the very recent proposal for 20 Penzance Place.

The removal of short-term shopping meters in a less than conservative manner by the Royal Borough has caused considerable concern among the trades in Holland Park Avenue, and is subject to review in early 1999.

The full implementation of the Holland Park Avenue Accident Prevention Scheme, on which the advice of the Norland Conservation Society Committee were sought, is likely to be somewhat delayed by works related to the new water mains, which new track will lie further south.

Robin Price, Chairman

Onslow Neighbourhood Association

To start on a sad note, the year has seen the death of the Rt. Hon. Sir Denys Buckley. Sir Denys very kindly agreed to become the first President of the Association when it was formed in June 1972, a post he held until March 1987. He was a distinguished lawyer who, via the Chancery bench, became a member of the Court of Appeal. He was always available to give the Association advice from his great legal experience, and will be greatly missed.

The event which has had the greatest impact in the area has been the purchase of the Old Smith's Charity Estate by the Wellcome Trust. The Association has been much involved with the Trust over the New Estate Management Scheme, now approved by the Lands Tribunal, and has been invited to act in an advisory capacity in its

implementation.

Of the two major planning sites in the area, that of the former North Block of the Royal Brompton Hospital is still a large building site, although the refurbished original building is now emerging from its scaffolding cover as are the two new matching brick clad terraces on its east and west boundaries. Of the second, South Kensington Station, planning approval has been given and presumably a developer with finance is now awaited.

At our Annual General Meeting this year, P C Glenn Duggan gave a talk on the new Neighbourhood Watch Initiative.

Sadly, for the second year running due to the weather, we had to cancel our main social event, the Summer Garden party. This is a great disappointment to the hard working committee, especially the loss of contact with our membership.

Hugh Brady, Chairman
16 Selwood Terrace, London SW7 2QG

Pembridge Association

The Pembridge Association has held regular meetings throughout the year at which the major topic - as always - has been controversial planning applications. By far the most contentious are the problem caused by 'permitted development', especially when this applies to demolishing garden walls and turning front gardens into carports. Unless an Article 4 (2) Direction is immediately placed on any property where development is taking place it is very difficult for the Council to prevent this happening.

In the Pembridge Conservation Area the loss of front gardens is something we have always strongly resisted, nothing is more visually obtrusive and the whole character of a street can so quickly be ruined by rows of cars parked where the front garden used to be. The Council supports our efforts to stop this happening and indeed refused permission on one such as in Pembridge Place. This went to appeal but the refusal was then upheld. To our chagrin another case two doors along went ahead and the charming garden was demolished, paved over and two cars now sit defacing the vista. We are watching two further cases in Dawson Place with apprehension.

We continue to be concerned about the loss of a number of mature trees in our area. We carefully vet all the application and wherever possible we lobby to prevent such felling but in most cases we are powerless to do so when it can be demonstrated that the tree is probably causing subsidence or making a wall dangerous. Although the Arboricultural Dept., of the RBK & C tries to insist that replacements are planted we have monitored numerous cases where this is never done and there is inadequate follow-up by the Council to ensure it.

This year we have continued to work closely with the Notting Hill Improvement Group, which has been responsible for so many beneficial projects in the locality which affect our Conservation Area. Our

thanks go to John Scott, Cllr David Campion and all on the committee who have put in so much time and hard work. The success of their efforts can be judged by walking around the main streets and seeing the stylish benches, hanging baskets, the improved paving and all the new trees.

Mrs V. Butler, Chairman

Victoria Road Area Residents Association

The main issue this year has been the threat of the Princess of Wales Memorial Garden. We have worked closely with the Society, neighbouring associations and the Princess Diana Memorial Action Group to scale down the proposals. Although the campaign has been successful, there will be a need for continued vigilance.

We are keen to 'complete' the traffic management scheme which covers the majority of our area, through the introduction of traffic calming measures to reduce traffic speeds and for junction treatments to mark the outer edge of the area, which would create a continuous pavement along Kensington Road and Gloucester Road. We have proposed these as suitable projects for funding from the Car Parking Reserve Account, which contains the accumulated surplus income from car parking.

The Council's review of residents parking and the conversion of meters to pay and display has produced proposals more residents' spaces. We will be making sure that the changes result in a reduction, not an increase, in parking sign poles.

We are very concerned about possible proposals for extending parking controls to evenings or Sunday's. At present parking problems caused by non-residents is restricted to the occasional Albert Hall shows. Indeed there may be a case for reducing controls, by removing our area from the Kensington High Street High Tariff Zone, which would remove Saturday afternoon parking controls.

Kenneth Woodward-Fisher, Chairman

Anne Woodward-Fisher, Hon Sec

14 Albert Place, W8.

THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY

Statement of Accounts for the year 1998

THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY

Income & Expenditure Account

INCOME & EXPENDITURE

	Y/E 31/12/98
INCOME	£
Subscriptions	4,758.80
Donations	9,262.00
Visit Receipts	2,639.25
Advertising	920.00
Interest	403.48
Other	52.11
Total	<u>£18,035.64</u>
EXPENDITURE	
Visits	1,828.75
Typing	330.00
Stationery/Printing	1,322.42
Postage/Telephone	489.17
Wren Press	132.78
Annual Report	2,850.00
Subscriptions	188.50
Advertising	360.00
Meeting Room Hire	270.10
Catering	258.25
Total	<u>£8,029.97</u>
Surplus/(Deficit)	£10,005.67

THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY

Balance Sheet as at December 31st 1998

BALANCE SHEET

	31/12/98
ASSETS	£
Equipment	-
Cash - Current A/Cs	
General Fund	10,915.69
Princess Alice Memorial Fund	3,023.26
Cash - Deposit A/Cs	
General Fund	7,858.32
National Savings investment a/c	<u>7,194.31</u>
	28,991.58
LIABILITIES	
Sundry	-
	£28,991.58
REPRESENTED BY	
General Fund b/f	15,962.65
Surplus/(Deficit)	<u>10,005.67</u>
	25,968.32
Princess Alice Memorial Fund b/f	3,936.18
Surplus/(Deficit)	<u>(912.92)</u>
	3,023.26
	£28,991.58

THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY
PRINCESS ALICE MEMORIAL FUND

INCOME & EXPENDITURE
Princess Alice Memorial Fund

	Y/E 31/12/98
INCOME	£
*A/R advertising	-
Interest	49.56
	£49.56
EXPENDITURE	
A/R costs	325.95
Tablet	200.00
Plants and fertiliser	418.03
Bulbs	-
Peat & soil	-
Sundry	18.50
	£962.48
Surplus/(Deficit)	(£912.92)

*A/R - Advertising in Annual Report

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It became a prosperous little town - no wonder that it became one of the most important retailing centres in London. Much of that shopping revolution was the work of John Barker, whose shops dominated the High Street until modern times. But even in the 19th century there was still much farm land around – enough to develop Museumland after the success of the Great Exhibition of 1851.

The story of Kensington is told in this new book of about 55,000 words and 181 illustrations – ideal for a present for yourself or a friend. The authors are Barbara Denny (who has written companion volumes in the series for Chelsea and Notting Hill) and Carolyn Starren, Kensington's Archivist.

*It is obtainable at local bookshops, price £14.95
hardback (160 pages), ISBN 0 948667 50 8.
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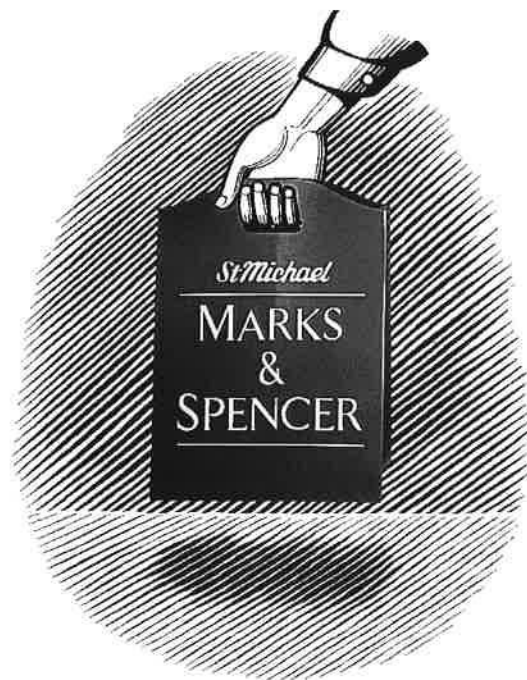
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MEMBERSHIP

I wish to become a member of The Kensington Society

I enclose the sum of £ for my annual subscription

Name: (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Title).....

Address

Signature Date

Corporate Membership: £25 Annual Subscription: £10

Affiliated Societies: £10

Annual Subscribers will simplify the collection of their subscriptions
if they will fill in the Banker's Order

Cheques should be made payable to: "The Kensington Society"

BANKER'S ORDERS

TO..... BANK

..... BRANCH

..... ACCOUNT NUMBER

Please immediately pay Barclays Bank PLC, Kensington (20-47-34) to the
credit of The Kensington Society (70519138) my subscription of £.
and continue the same on January 1st until further notice.

Name: (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Title).....

Address

Signature Date

Please Return to:

The Membership Secretary, The Kensington Society
c/o 2 Campden Hill Court, Observatory Gardens, London W8 7HX
(Tel: 0171-937 2750)

THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY

I,
(Full name)

of
(Address)

HEREBY COVENANT with THE KENSINGTON SOCIETY, c/o 15 Kensington Square, W8, that for a period of years from the 1st day of 19, or during the residue of my life, whichever shall be shorter, I will pay annually to the said Society from my general fund of taxed income such a sum as after the deduction of income tax at the rate for the time being in force will amount to the net sum of £10.

IN WITNESS whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal this ... day of 19

Signed, sealed and delivered by the above-named COVENANTER in the presence of

WITNESS

ADDRESS

.....

.....

.....

OCCUPATION

SIGNATURE

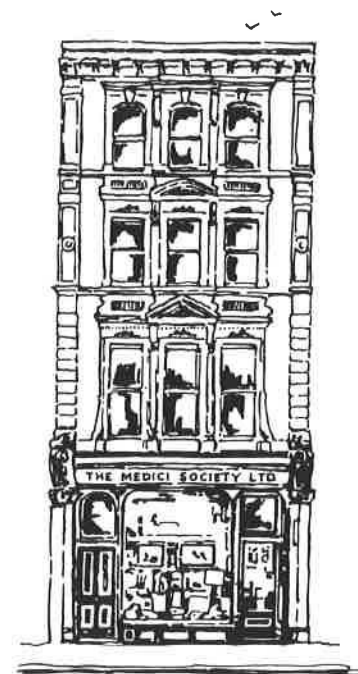
.....

PLEASE NOTE

- 1 The number of years for which the covenant is being made should be inserted in the space provided. This can be for any period from four years upwards or for life.
- 2 The date to be inserted as the beginning of the period should not be earlier than the date on which the covenant is executed.
- 3 Unless your first subscription under the covenant is paid on or after the date when the above period begins, the Society will not be able to reclaim the Income Tax on such payment.
- 4 The document should be returned as soon as possible after completion, in order that it may not be out of date for stamping.

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